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AUGUST 1903

THE RED BOOK



A SHORT STORY MAGAZINE

Published by

PLAIN VIOLATION OF LAW

(Magazine law this means, not moral law, statute law, or the constitution.)

It is an unwritten law in magazine publication that the summer is a time of reduced sales and consequently of reduced editions. The reason is plain to see—hot evenings; short evenings; summer gardens; vacation journeys, instead of long winter evenings and cheerful firesides.

THE RED BOOK HAS BROKEN THE LAW.—Each succeeding issue has been increased, and each succeeding issue has been sold out cleaner and more completely as the season has advanced and hotter days have come.

The August **RED BOOK** is issued with a large increase in the edition, and so convincing are the evidences of favor that another leap in numbers is to be made a month later. Ask the newsdealer you know best. He will tell you. Ask him too, if he has ever known of a similar success by a new magazine at such a season.

Of course there is a reason for it. **THE RED BOOK** is cheerful, summery vacation reading, just as good at this season as at any other time, and better than anything else offered for the season. Try it on the steamer, on the train, in the hammock or on the veranda. You will see for yourself.

Do you wonder that we are rapidly approaching a point of elation and pride in our own record? That may be an improper mental attitude, but publishers are not above being glad when they win popular favor with something that is worthy of it.

STORIES IN THE SEPTEMBER RED BOOK

The September number of **THE RED BOOK** will be rich in good reading for mid-summer days. Among the stories ready to announce are the following:

"TIGER HEART," by Robert Hichens, a dramatic story of a broken engagement, with a strange explanation.

"THE CARNATION," by Yone Noguchi, the Japanese writer whose stories have won such wide favor for their delicacy and gentle charm.

"A WOMAN HATER," by Harriet A. Nash, a story of a vacation episode on a New England farm, full of homely, human sympathy, and of special timeliness.

"LOVE AND THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN," by Wingrove Bathon, a dainty sketch, prose in form but poetry in its feeling.

"THE JEWEL HUNGRY," by Juliette Sager, a story of a gypsy girl, a King's favorite, and a vicious plot that failed.

"THE COUNTRY OF THE HEART," by Richard H. Post, a story of that land which is everywhere, for those who are dwellers in it.

WATCH THE RED BOOK

THE RED BOOK publishes nothing but original stories, and of these it aims to print the best, the cleverest, the most readable. Its table of contents includes not only contributions by authors of recognized ability and wide fame, but others from rising young writers who are making reputations through this favored medium.

THE RED BOOK invites the submission of manuscripts of short stories, and will render prompt and careful editorial judgment as to their availability. Manuscripts must be sent flat or folded—never rolled,—fully prepaid, and accompanied by an addressed and stamped envelope for return. The utmost care will be taken of manuscripts submitted, but the Editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage in the mail or otherwise. Manuscripts should be between 1,000 and 6,000 words in length. Any clean, original story may be available. There is no purpose to limit the field to those of one form, and manuscripts submitted for consideration will be judged upon their merit alone.

Best Fiction by Best Writers

THE RED BOOK

EDITED BY TRUMBULL WHITE

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CHARLES M. RICHTER, Business Manager.

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DRAWN BY J. V. MC FALL.

“The drunken bum, as cool as a cucumber and as nimble as a monkey.”

“None-such Rafferty’s Great Ride;” See page 316.

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THE RED BOOK

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August, 1903

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The sullen gangs, wet and weary even beyond the point of profanity, were going about with the stake-puller, a long lever mounted on two wheels, dragging the big, stubborn maintop stakes from the dense, rain-soaked clay of the lot on which we had endeavored to show that day and night. The lot was the uneven oval inside the race track of the county fair-grounds of an Ohio town.

Here and there over the dark expanse flitted the lanterns of the gang bosses, where the last stake-and-chain wagons were being loaded for the trainward haul. At the farther side the departing pole wagons could be heard jolting over the planks which had been laid to corduroy the crossing of the miry track.

I have said that we endeavored to show there that day and night; and a futile effort it had been. The afternoon's performance had been but an hour on its noisy way, with nine thousand people in the main tent, when a July electrical storm had come on suddenly and driven half the people from the place in

terror, while the rain that had followed the thunder and lightning had peppered through the thick duck and drenched the half that remained.

The downpour continued for hours. The tightening canvas pulled the stakes from the ground faster than the sledgemen could drive them in again. The fires at the cook-shack could not withstand the combined winds and waters, and so, at supper time, the performers had perched on their trunks in the double-roofed dressing tent and eaten soggy sandwiches in philosophic silence. At nine o'clock the movement back to the train had begun, all hope having been given up of being able to give an evening performance.

When the elephants in the morning parade were returning to the lot, they had crossed a bridge near the fair-ground gate, which had nearly given way under their combined weight, and the town authorities had prohibited us from recrossing with the big beasts before the city engineer had made an inspection and reported.

So it came about that Limpy Hawes and I sat, steaming and wretched, in the judges' stand beside the race course, waiting for orders from the owner of the show, who had gone down town to stir up the powers.

Now and then the huge forms of the herd could be seen near by, when a lightning spot in the watery sky threw them into relief. We could hear the old King of Menagerie Cay enjoying a squirting frolic from a small pool which had formed near his stake.

The old man had been silently chewing his quid, and at last squared around toward me and tossed the tobacco away in the darkness before he told me the story of None-such Rafferty's great ride.

"That's a nice stepper that new feller Roland rode in the nigh ring to-day, right after the Japs got through, warn't it?" he began. "Well, sir, I knowed that hoss as soon as I seen him; ruther I knowed the mare he come out of. Couldn't fool me on none a hern. I knowed sartin before I ast that his mother was old Cleo, the finest hoss that ever kicked up sawdust, *la prima de la monde entiere*, as the Frenchers say. Yessiree, the first in the whole world, and I've seen some good ones too.

"Queer, hain't it, that this new hoss should jine the old show his dam was with so long, right here on the lot where she done what any showman in the country can tell you she done, right here on the lot where she carried old None-such Rafferty on his great ride—the greatest ride ever done with a show. Queer, hain't it? But it's the queer things that really happen, and the best liar is the one that's read the hist'ry books.

"Reckon it must be seven, eight years back, I know it 'uz after I kept store and postoffis in Missury that time, 'cause None-such was with the show then.

"Well, sir, take m' oath, old None-such was the finest rider in any style that ever jumped a ribbon. Never was his equill before nur sence. That's why they called him None-such, though his name on the paper was Signor Larapetita and his old woman was Signorina Mondragona. She couldn't be beat for her kind nuther. Oh, they's a great pair, I tell ye and this country's seen bettern' it'll ever see agin in their line, for Mister and Missus Mike Rafferty has both gone on.

"They's in the bizzness when I struck it, though they wasn't hitched then. I did a reel at their weddin' and picked the name for their one baby, and she growed up in the show and run off with a French cook. 'Bout two years after that, None-such went where she'd died, up in Canady some place, and brung back her baby, and then they raised that.

"Purtiest little yaller head y' ever seen! It's gran'pap was so gol-blame proud of it he couldn' wait for it to git out of long dresses before he begun to put it on hossback, and the kid jest took to ridin' like a hyena takes to bad beef.

"It 'uz 'long jest about then old None-such, who'd allus drunk more'r less, took to puttin' it down his gullet mornin', noon'n night, like as he's afear'd there wouldn' be enough to go round next day. That winter he soaked up so much lick'er it 'uz nip and tuck whether to put him in the Keeley or a bonded warehouse. When spring come he wasn't fit to begin workin' out the hosses, and the old lady had to do most of it. Then she begun to squeal like a stuck pig, and she licked the devil



"She took to ridin' like a hyena takes to bad beef."

outa him two'r three times, but it didn' do no good. It never stopped his rum-guzzlin' a bit, and he'd git even for the lickin's by waitin' till he got her in a crowd round the rehearsin' shed, and callin' 'tenshun to her bum lamp. She was a mighty good looker, only one of her eyes had a little reverse English on it, but that didn' never interfere with

her ridin'. If you'd hit her with a brick though, you couldn'a' made her feel no worse then to mention that eye, and None-such knowed it.

"Things went from bad to worse till one day the old man come down from the office and found None-such asleep in the manger of Cleo's stall, and he told None-such then and there the contrack would haveta be

suspended if None-such didn' stop tryin' to drink Conneticut dry.

"Now, ye see, None-such loved that kid to death and he loved his hosses too, and he knowed it didn' matter whuther he went out with the show'r not, the old lady, the kid and the hosses would go jest the same, so he braced up, oh, I reckon, for purty near two months, and then while we was on the road at Frankfort, Kaintucky, he went on an awful bender and the old man left him behind in jail where they'd soaked him for stealin' a fire-engine hoss to show how he could ride up'n' down the courthouse steps. It was hoss thief'r lunatic, jail'r asylum, and he got jail.

"Well, sir, take m' oath, I often felt sorry for poor old None-such when I'd hear the kid astin' ev'ry-body round the show when her gran'-pap was comin' back. Little as she was, warn't more'n three, she missed 'im, and didn't forgit him nuther. Ev'ry now'n then we hear of the old feller, finest rider that ever crossed a hoss, wanderin' round the country out of a job, jest a rum-huntin' old bum.

"Think it 'uz three years after he went clear wrong, when we showed here on this lot. By that time little Anette, that was what they called her, had larnt to ride most any of the common turns and had a great one, a reglar jimdandy which she and her gran'ma put on together. It 'uz ridin' a tandem three, standin', jumpin' hurdles.

"Good old Cleo was the lead hoss in this turn. The second hoss was Bittersweet; called her that 'cause she's as nice a critter as you'd wanta handle most the time, but she'd git a spell ev'ry now'n then jest like some wimmen folks, and when she had a tantrum the devil himself could'a' larned wickedness from her.

The kid rode Bittersweet, standin' with her feet in little ankle-loops, and ribbens from Cleo's bridle run back under her arms to the hands of her gran'ma, who rode a big level-headed bay named McClellan.

"Well, sir, take m' oath, though the Raffertys in the old days done things a heap harder for grown people, the people allus went wild when the kid and the old woman rode them three hosses around the track over four-foot jumps, five put on each stretch. Don't see nothin' like that no more, do ye?

"This hoss Cleo was a beauty, purtyern' her colt you seen to-day by a durn sight, and he's no slouch. I never seen a critter have as much sense lessen it 'uz the King over there, and he's got twict as much as any critter livin' and a whole lot more'n most people drawin' government pay. Yessir, he's a reg'lar *Hathi* of Heaven as the Burman says. When None-such was with the show, Cleo was his particklar own, and let him jest say a word to her and she'd do'r try to do anythin' he told her.

"Jest 'fore dinner, the day we showed here, I 'uz in with Early Jim Butts helpin' him give his hairy-eared rhinoceros a shampoo, when Jiggers Dollman come by and stuck his face up agin the bars and says kinda whisperin' like:

"'None-such Rafferty's back.'

"'Where is he?' I says.

"'Over in one of the dummy waggins,' says he; 'I'm goin' t' git him straightened up a little 'fore I let him out. He says he wants to see the old woman and the kid and Cleo onct more. Don't look like the same man; he's white as a snow-storm,' says he.

"I was minded to go over and see if there was anythin' I could do for him, but the critters was fretful, and



"His hat flyin' off, his rags wavin' up and down, his white hair streamin'."

kep' me too golblame busy to stir a peg axcept for them.

"The tent was jammed that afternoon, and the people was even standin' thick in the entrances. Ev'rythin' was goin' lovely. From the critter tent, I heard the band play the music for the grand entry. Then come the call for the first turns; the Lorimers on center stage, the Japs for the far ring, and Elita on the wire for the nigh one. Then I heard the gong and call for the second turns, and knowed the ba'r, Cinnamon Fritz and the Dutchman Mendelbaum was in the center, with Jerry Davis and his dogs on one side, and the clown donkey and Jiggers Dollman, who was a joey, on the tuther. Then the joey's kep' the crowd laffin', while the razor-backs was puttin' up the ten jumps in the hippodrome for Anette and

her gran'ma. Jumps was four foot high, trussels of oak scantlin' with imytashun sod sides and brush tops.

"Purty soon I heard the hands a clappin' and the kids yellin' and whistlin' and the cornets doin' a swell ta-tat-tat-ta-ta-ah like they allus did for the Raffertys, and I knowed the tandem three had trotted in, Cleo covered with blue'n gold ribbens leadin', Anette with floatin' pink skirts standin' on Bittersweet, and Signorina Mondragona Ann Rafferty lookin' no more'n twenty in her make up, yeller wig and fleshin's, ridin' jaunty on McClellan.

"I heard the first funny little yawp the wimmen in the crowd allus let out when that baby and her granny went a-tiltin' over the first jump, then the hand they got as they took another, 'n' another 'n' so on.

"Reckon they must 'a' jest finished

the first time round, when, 'cordin' to what the boys tell me, as they's passin' the performers' entrance, None-such Rafferty, bung-faced, dirty and raggety and tremblin' all over, havin' crept out of the dummy waggin' hearin' the call of the cornets he knowed so well, come staggerin' in that way.

"The old lady jest let out a screech and keeled at the sight of 'im, let go of the ribbens, and flopped down on McClellan's back. He stopped like the good hoss he was, and a razorback ketched her 'fore she fell off.

"The other hosses kep' on agoin', for the next jump, but by Gosh A'mighty, when Missus Rafferty had knuckled under, she'd jerked the ribbens under Anette's arms and yanked the kid off her footin'! One of the ankle-loops had ketched her foot, and she's hangin' by one leg head down on Bittersweet's right side.

"The screamin' and yellin' of the crowd fetched me in in a minnit, and I 'uz jest in time to see Bittersweet in the air at the first jump.

"Take m' oath, that child's head dragged through the brush not two inches from the scantlin' of the trussel. Bittersweet had her ears laid back, and I knowed she meant to be a hellion for awhile.

"A razorback run out to stop her, but she rammed him down and tramped on him. Nuther one ketched her bridle, but the jerk ripped it off and the ribbens come with it.

"It was skeery I tell ye, *shito-goroshi* as the Japs say. The crowd was crazy and all standin' up, but somehow they didn' try to run or it would 'a' been worse'n ever. Ev'ry jump that devil-hoss took, that poor baby's curly, yellor head ripped through the imytashun brush, jest in an ace of havin' her brains batted out agin the scantlin'.

"Sooner'n I can say the words, the two hosses had gone clean round, and while Bittersweet kep' on goin' like Sam Hill, Cleo run right up to the performers' entrance where old None-such Rafferty was standin', kind o' pawin' in the air before his face like a boxin' kangaroo, as if he's fuddled and didn' see right.

But when his old hoss run up to him, it 'peared his old self jest riz up inside his raggety clothes, and 'fore any one could tech him'r the hoss, he straightened up, give one of his old startin' yells, and jumped on her back light as a feather and was off, his hat a-flyin' off, his rags wavin' up and down, his white hair streamin'—he was off chasin' the runaway that was draggin' his gran' baby through the fingers o' death.

"Ah, my boy, my boy, sech ridin'! Nary a saddle'r rein, only him speakin' to her, him a-standin' up leanin' forwards, her a-turnin' her ears back to listen, the same old None-such that used to be, her a-length'nin' out, tryin' to ketch up. Same old man! Same old hoss!

"On the first turn they's only a len'th back. Down the five jumps they come hell-bent for elecshun. Ev'ry minnit I reckoned that ankle-loop'd give way or the hoss stumble'r shorten her jump and it'd be all over.

"On the lower turn Cleo was right 'long side Bittersweet and — Wallopin' Moses!—None-such Rafferty, the drunken bum, as cool as a cucumber and nimble as a monkey, steps over on the runaway's back and lifts up the danglin' baby jest as easy as I'd pick up a poplar shavin'!

"He kep' callin' to Cleo to keep 'longside, and betwixt the first two jumps he seen his chanct and laid the kid on Cleo's back where the little 'un stuck like a cockleburr while the good old mare took the other jumps

and cantered up to me and stopped. I took the blessed baby off and only when she got her arms round my neck did she begin to cry.

"Seein' the child safe, None-such started in to stop Bittersweet. He dropped straddle of her and waited his chance to reach round and ketch her nose and pull it round, seein' she didn't have no bridle. A lot of razorbacks and so on run out to help.

"Bittersweet seen 'em headin' her off in front, so she jest swings around and jumps the side ropes into the first ring, and goes a-plungin' and a-jumpin' straight down the middle of the tent over spring boards, bar-r'ls, pedestals, over center stage, over everythin', be Gosh A'mighty!

"Boy, I never seen such ridin' as that. I never will agin, and nuther will you. None-such Rafferty stuck perfect. There never was anythin' like it—never—never!

"Back she come agin, clost along the side, and when the razorbacks got in front of her halfway up, all to onct she took the side ropes and then tried to take the first jump in the track, but she was too clost—too clost. She hadn't time to gather herself, and she come down like a ton-a brick, doublin' her neck under her and breakin' it.

"Old None-such had sensed, I reckon, she'd never clear the jump, 'cause he stood up real quick and when he went off in the air stuck his spraddled fingers up and somehow—

somehow ketched a-hold the nettin' for the trapeze trio and hung jigglin' up an' down a minnit, then dropped in a heap on the track clost to the hoss.

"But he got right up, kind o' white an' smilin', and jest then the old man come bustin' through the bunch round None-such and grabbed None-such's hand, and swore awful, and says,

"'Ef you can ride like that, by this and that and the other thing, you can stay with this show and drink yourself to death if you want to, but you stay with the show, you damned old drunkard you!"

"Yes, sir, that's jest what the old man said, and None-such took him at his word. But he'd had so much practice in the drinkin' line he stuck out longer 'n the old woman at that."

There was a lantern coming toward us across the blackness.

"Hey, Limpy, where are you," called the owner's voice from the direction of the light.

"Right over here," responded the old trainer, preparing to rise.

"I've lined up the police force with two dollars apiece, and now you better hustle the elephants down. Take Hector over last, and the others one at a time, mind you."

"All right, sir," answered Limpy, and we climbed down out of the stand into the black sea of mud and water.



Maman Greuze

BY JOHN W. HUNT

It is copying day in the Louvre, and through the bright sunshine of a spring morning, eager recruits in the army of art hurry toward the open doors of the famous palace. Through the formal alleys of the Tuilleries gardens, across the somber quadrangle of the Cour du Louvre, over the Pont des Arts, from the Latin Quarter, hoary with tradition, from the newer Bohemian center grown up on Montmartre, from far away, suburban Passy, they gather. For the most part they are young, but some old, many in eccentric garb, costumes which would be thought grotesque in any city save Paris; others with no sartorial indications of their pursuit, but all with the wrapt expression of the poet and the dreamer. They pass unsolicited the group of guides hungrily awaiting the coming of the tourists, and set about their tasks in the great galleries of the palace.

"Let me help you."

The speaker, whose clean-cut face, no less than the absence of the bizarre in his clothing, proclaimed his Anglo-Saxon origin and his own strong individuality, hurried, hat in hand, to where a young girl had set about arranging her implements in the Salon Denon.

"Why Mr. Rodney, what are you doing here?" she asked, while he set up her easel, placed the little square of cloth to protect the polished floor from student boot-heels, and drew up a stool before her canvas. "Seeking inspiration for sky-scraping office-buildings by contemplating Corot and Millet?"

"One who seeks to create the beautiful may find inspiration in all things beautiful," he rejoined, with

a glance which plainly told in what quarter he found his.

He watched her for a moment in silence while she slipped her paint-stained blouse over her walking costume.

"You artists are an intolerant lot," he resumed. "You appear to believe that the highest expression of art is possible only through the medium of rose madder, chrome and all the rest of it."

"Oh! I'm not so bad as that," she laughed. "But," and her eyes, cast discreetly into the depths of her color box, twinkled with sly mischief, "but, frankly now, I shouldn't think that a study of 'The Gleaner,' for instance, would be productive of ideas for a millionaires' club."

"You are laughing at me," and Rodney's tone betrayed a shade of annoyance. "What I meant was——"

"I know what you mean, and you are right. I was only joking. By all means absorb all the beauty possible, and when the École des Beaux Arts says you are a full-fledged architect, go back and give our dear old native land the benefit of it."

"If they will only let me. I am to put it to the test soon. I finish in two months, you know. And when do you think of returning?"

"I? Oh, never, probably. My life is here, in my work. I've been an orphan since I can remember, and my relations—well, the laws of natural affection don't always stretch to cover one's relations, you know."

"You don't mean to say that you really contemplate ending your days here, like this?"

"Not quite like this," she replied. "Rather, let us hope, as a successful painter."

"Art isn't everything."



"Costumes that would be thought grotesque in any city save Paris."

"Isn't it? Well, I'll make it so in my case."

"With such an example of what it may do for its devotees as that?" and Rodney indicated with a sweep of his hand a little old woman who sat before an easel, on the opposite side of the gallery.

A great wave of pity swept over Janet Loghcrea, and touched her

piquant face with a tenderer loveliness as her eye followed his gesture and rested on "Maman Greuze." This name, bestowed on its bearer long ago by a facetious student, still survived, years after her real one had been forgotten. One of those she was, who, setting forth so confidently on the voyage of art, had failed to reach the great ocean of the world's

regard. Amid the shoals and eddies of its tributaries many are cast away, and other many drift into the back-water of a copyist's life.

Of such was "Maman Greuze." She was loved in a patronizing way by her fellow-workers, loved yet unknown, for she held no intercourse with any. No one knew where she lived, or how. She was never known to sell a picture. She was an enigma. When the present students first came to Paris she was there in the same place. Those who were leaving told the newcomers that as they then saw her, so had she appeared when they first came, and had so appeared to a forgotten number of newcomers, reaching back into the years. Even the professional copyists, old men and women themselves, some of them, could tell nothing more about her. When, after buffeting with the world, they had crept back, defeated, to this haven of obscurity, "Maman Greuze," white-haired then, as now, sat where she sits now, copying the identical picture which she copies now, the picture from which she acquired her name.

It is one of Greuze's masterpieces, "La Laitière." The young milk-seller leans against her pony's neck, her face radiant with the fresh and youthful beauty Greuze knew so well how to paint, turned toward the spectator, half frankly, half shyly; while her mouth struggles with a suppressed smile. Ah! that mouth! It has been "Maman Greuze's" insurmountable obstacle all these years. By the master's hand a trick of foreshortening has transformed canvas and pigment into a living reality. In that of poor "Maman Greuze" it becomes a grotesque distortion.

So Janet, who knew these things, looked and sighed.

"Is it possible?" she murmured to

herself. Then, rallied by the bold confidence of youth, her bantering mood returned and sweeping him a mock courtesy, she said:

"Thank you, Mr. Rodney, for your implied opinion of my ability. Its unflattering character is amply atoned by its evident sincerity."

"Oh, come now! Why will you so wilfully misinterpret everything I say? You know, you must know—I have shown it often enough and plainly enough—what I think of you. For me everything you say or do——"

"But this morning I have done nothing, nor am I likely to do anything if I continue to stand talking to you. So go away, please, and let me work," and she fell furiously to mixing the colors on her palette.

"No, I'll not go away until I've spoken. I must——"

"Go at once to study the drawings of Michael Angelo. You'll find them in the other end of the Louvre. Ah! Don't be offended. I'm sorry, believe me. We've been good comrades, haven't we? Don't spoil the memory of it. Why talk of the impossible? Your work lies over there, across the water; mine is here, and," she added, after an instant, "my heart is with it."

Rodney gazed wistfully at the fair head bent over the tangle of tubes and brushes, and his jaw set, masterfully.

"The work may be transferred over there, and the heart with it," he entreated.

"Ah! you do not understand." She paused, then hurried on, almost petulantly: "There is no room in a woman's heart for art and love of a man too. No, not even if she cared to have it so."

"Then you—you do not care?"

"I've already answered you," she said, gently but positively. There



“ Ah ! that mouth ! it has been her insurmountable obstacle all these years.”

was just the slightest hesitation before she spoke, but the tone was that of a woman who has made up her mind.

Other copying days, but Rodney comes no more. She has had her way, but as she mixes the colors, some drops that are not of oil, splash upon the palette. Her hand trembles on the mahlstick and the brush halts, poised midway between paints and picture. Across the broad gallery "Maman Greuze" shakes her head wearily over that unmanageable mouth.

Midway between flows the full sight-seeing tide: the German tourist in narrow-brimmed Alpine hat and flowing cape-overcoat, spectacles on nose, Baedeker in hand, methodically ploughs his way from picture to picture as through a table of statistics; the British tourist in resonant plaids and shrieking golf stockings, marshalling a procession of Mrs. British Tourist and the Little Tourists, stalks stolidly along with the air of being ashamed that he is there at all; a guide, playing "center" in a "rush line" of Americans, sweeps through the crowd, the party in "wedge-formation," following with the strenuous impetuosity of people entered to see so many miles of pictures in an hour, and catch the train to Versailles in the afternoon; these and others pass through and away, unconscious of the romance on either hand.

Janet tells herself that she is glad, that it was impossible, that it is better so, and works with feverish energy. But often she starts from a reverie to find herself gazing at "Maman Greuze."

It was in such a moment of abstraction that, glancing in the direction of "La Laitière" one

morning, she was surprised into an exclamation of dismay. "Maman Greuze" was not in her accustomed place. The word passed rapidly through the room, and strangely-trousered young men forsook their easels and crowded around to ask the question which nobody could answer: "Where is 'Maman Greuze'?"

Another Thursday and still no "Maman Greuze," and, strange thing too, her poor painting was gone. Janet noted these things while in the act of donning her working blouse, paused, drew it off, and marched resolutely to find the custodian. But certainly, said that official, it was gone, taken quite away. An old woman had come, with the requisite credentials to remove the thing, and had carried it away with her. Where? Ah! Who knows? Not he, certainly. Yet stay, she had signed a receipt and given an address. If Mademoiselle wishes—

Mademoiselle did wish it, so, ten minutes later she was walking briskly along the Quai de la Megisserie. Crossing the Pont Notre Dame she cut through the Marche aux Fleurs, passed under the towering facade of the great cathedral, over the other arm of the Seine by the Pont au Double and plunged into the labyrinth of narrow streets on the left bank. She walked with the unhesitating directness of one who knows her way and stopped at last before a squalid house which reared a grimy, many-storied front far above its neighbors. The sun was the sun of early June, with all its customary fervor; the street, scarce more than an alley, was a street of the older Latin Quarter, with all its accustomed smells. Janet shuddered and grew faint, but resolutely pulled herself together and entered the little shop which opened off the sidewalk.

The Cerberus of the place, a wo-

man, broad and squat, scowled upon her with suspicion at her first inquiry. Was it the custom, then, to pay morning calls on persons whose name even, one did not know? Better be off and not stand wasting the time of folk who had to work for the bread they ate.

impolite. Madame would kindly pardon it? Ah! if Madame knew how jealously she hid herself away, this lodger; how she shrank from observation, Madame would understand. But since Madame came in sympathy, and the lodger, poor old woman, seemed to be really very ill,



"A woman broad and squat scowled upon her with suspicion."

But few could long withstand Janet when she sought to please, and the rudeness of the woman diminished by swift degrees before her amiable persistence. It was for her old lodger's sake that she had been

why, that certainly, was different. It is long that she has been here, the lodger? But yes! Would Madame picture to herself, she, this lodger, had come to them with the house! Yes, truly, with the house! When

the previous tenants died and she and her husband rented the property, they had found this lodger there, in the attic, and she had continued to live there ever since.

This from the woman while she led the way, anxious to atone for her previous rudeness, up and still up the dark stone staircase, until, at last, panting and breathless, they stood at the top. A gesture toward the room, a good-humored nod to the request that she summon a doctor, and the woman began to descend. Janet stepped across the narrow hall and opened the door.

It was one of the queer, many-cornered rooms still to be found under the tiles in the old quarters of Paris. The floor of bricks, the ceiling blotched by ancient leaks and shorn of its plaster here and there, sloped sharply downward toward the front, from which a dormer window jutted. An old commode, its rosewood bearing scars of journeyings to and fro in the hands of many masters, crutched by a broken teacup where its missing castor left it crippled, huddled against the further wall as if shrinking from contact with the plebeian, rush-bottomed chair and deal-top table which, with the iron camp bed, comprised the remaining furniture. Stretched on the bed, helpless and plainly frightened by the unaccustomed apparition of a visitor, lay "Maman Greuze."

But fear swiftly yielded to admiration for the fair young girl, framed in the doorway. The two, so far apart yet so strangely near, regarded each other in silence for a moment. Then Janet sank upon her knees at the bedside, and taking the old woman's hand in both her own, said:

"I have come to nurse you, you poor old dear."

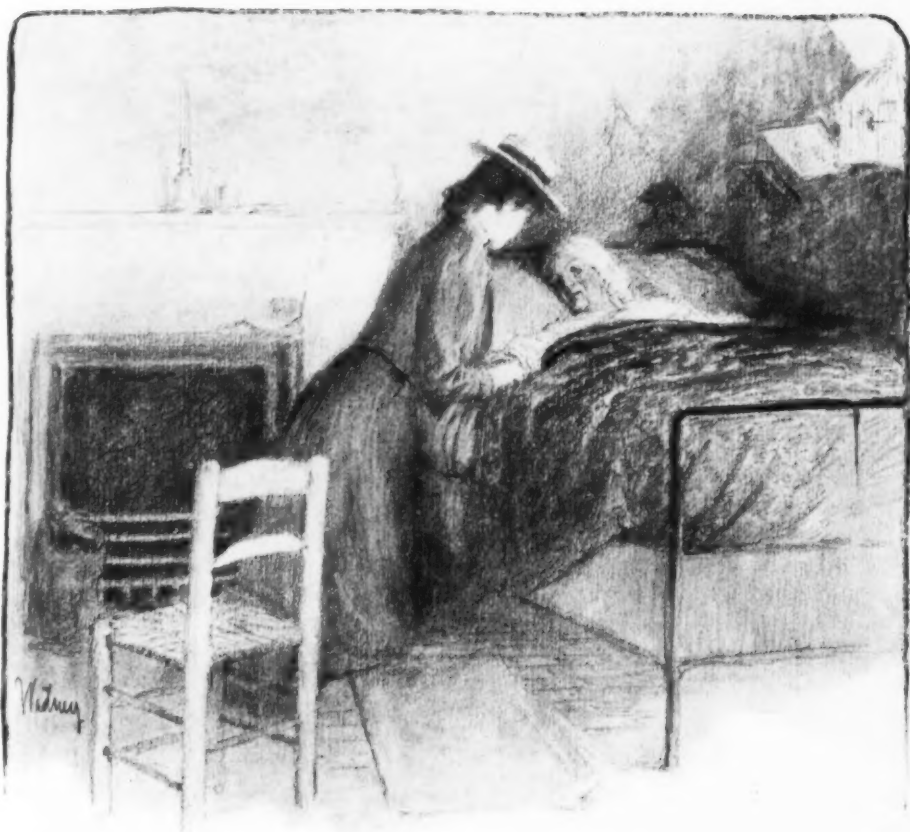
And peace and gratitude shone from the sick woman's eyes. It had

hungered so long for human sympathy, this poor, starved old heart, so long, so long!

For many minutes neither stirred, neither spoke. Then Janet lighted the sticks in the rickety grate and made the chocolate, chatting the while as if it were all the most natural thing in the world. Then food and water for the canary, and water for the geraniums blooming so gayly on the window ledge, the window which overlooked a sea of roofs to where the old church of St. Severin raised its ancient walls, from which the gargoyles grinned hideously. And as she moved to and fro, filling the poor room with the glory of her presence, the torpor of despair fell away from the other's soul as fog unrolls before the sunshine.

The doctor came and shook his head. Worn out, that was all. A few days or a few hours and then the long rest. Ah, thanks, no, and the man of medicine waved aside the tendered fee. He could do nothing. Mademoiselle could do all that was possible—smooth the descent to the grave. So when he went away she resumed her station beside the bed and listened to the flood of talk which followed the breaking of the barriers of a lifelong silence, melted before an act of compassion.

Diffidently at first, but with greater freedom as she lived over again in the telling, the bright days of her youth, poor "Maman Greuze" poured forth the story of a life's love-labor wasted, of the futile strivings of a soul which could feel, hampered by a hand which could not express. She had loved her Art? Ah! dear God, yes! Loved it with a love which made her blind to her own mediocrity, blind and deaf to that other love which, knocking unheeded at the portals of her heart, had left its echoes ringing in vain regrets



"I have come to nurse you, you poor old dear."

through the weary years of the awakening.

Yes, she had loved him, though she had not known it then. He was a student too, and would have married her. But she would not. No, she was ambitious. She would make her name world-famous. And when, his entreaties scorned, he had ridiculed her ambitious dreams, they had quarreled. He had meant well, yes truly, but, like a man, knew not the wound his words inflicted.

"So he went away. I remember it well," said "Maman Greuze," with a sigh. "I have never forgotten it. It was before the picture

where you have seen me work so many days, and where I have sat and worked so many days before you were born, my dear. That was forty years ago, and I have never seen him since."

"Nor heard?"

"Not a word."

"Perhaps he died."

"Maybe—died or forgotten. Men do forget, you know. But I remembered. I used to have an idea that he would come back, so every copying day I would place my easel where we had parted and wait on that spot to tell him that I had been wrong. But he never came. So as

the years passed and hope died, I continued to go from habit and because there I could dream best of the old days when art was life to me. Ah! I had not learned then that the human heart needs human sympathy,—love."

Her eyes sought the patch of blue sky framed in the sloping window, mistily she saw it through unshed tears and, sighing, even while a sad smile lifted the drooping corners of the poor old mouth, she resumed:

"I see it now, the truth. It is the glorious true art to live your great ideals. It is a mistake to believe that they can only be squeezed out of color tubes."

Silence in the little room under the tiles. The blue faded to the gray of twilight, the gray to the black of night: an epitome of the old copyist's life. Then her soul passed out into the infinite and the sky was hung with stars.

The hearse and the mourning coaches with their sweeping, black hammer-cloths, stand before the little café where the drivers, ridiculous in the regulation black cock hats, high boots and mourning-braided frock coats, seek relaxation in a glass. In the neighboring cemetery of Montparnasse a group

is still gathered about the grave of "Maman Greuze." Slowly it disperses, and Janet finds Rodney at her side. They walk in silence for a little while. Then Rodney speaks to her.

"It is beautiful," he is saying, his eye roving from the vantage point on the hill to some of the striking features of the great city spread before them; to *Sacre Coeur*, gleaming white from the summit of Montmartre, past intervening spires and turrets to where the *Arc de Triomphe* rears its massive height; on to the vivid green of the *Bois de Boulogne* and back along the silver *Seine* to the airy towers of the *Trocadero*. "How I regret to leave it."

"Yes," Janet answered, "so shall I."

"What! You? You mean to say that—that you intend to leave it?"

"Yes."

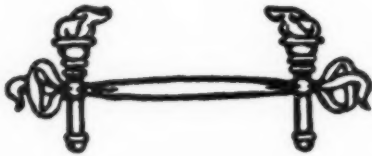
"But when?"

One swift glance which read the soul in his eyes, a flood of color which dyed face and neck, and the words, scarce whispered:

"Whenever you wish."

She checked his rapturous exclamation with a gesture toward the grave of "Maman Greuze." Tears were in her eyes.

"She taught me," she said.





The Martyrdom of Rensdale

BY ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

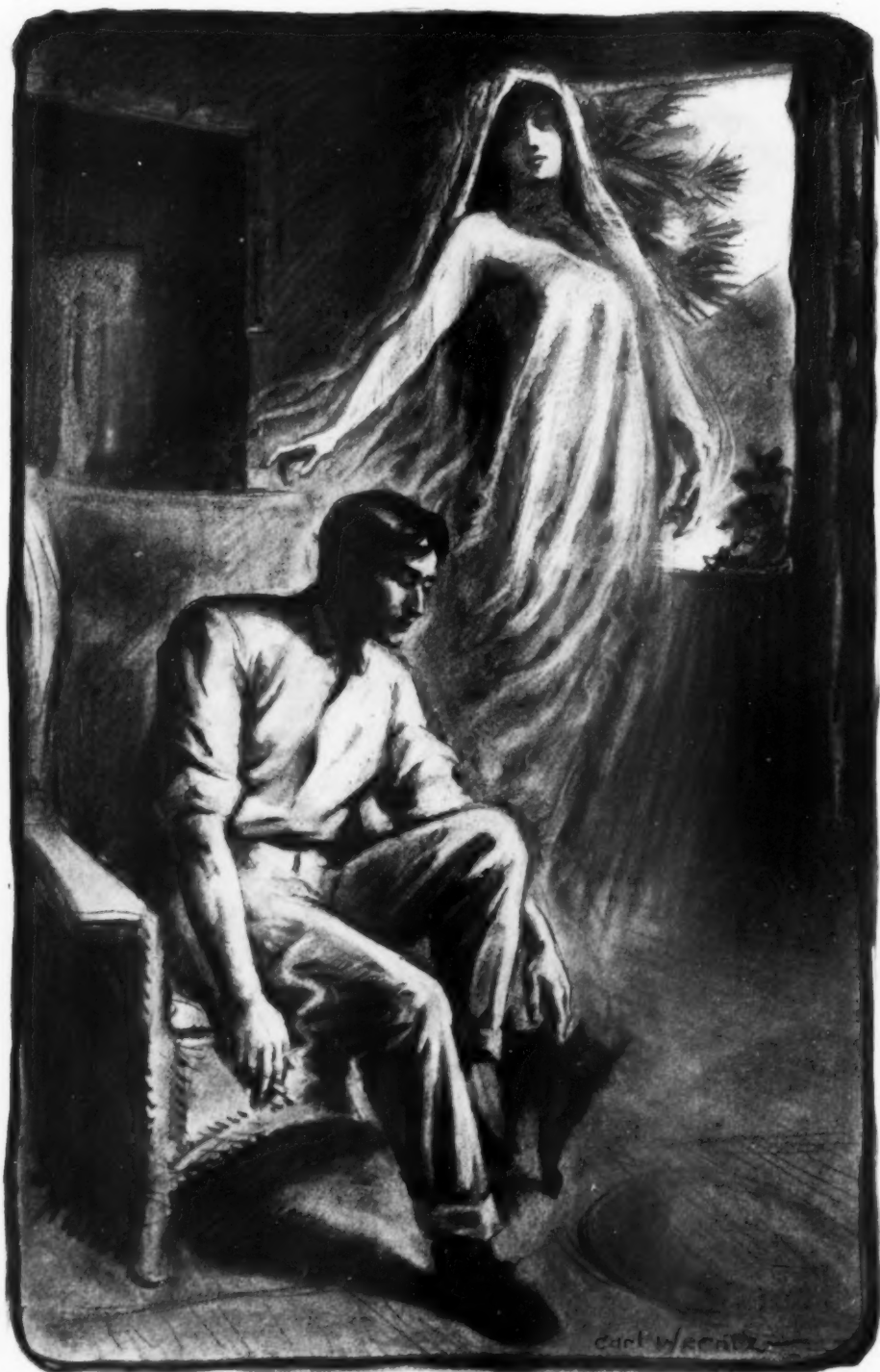
Rensdale sat upon the lanai of his Hamakua ranche house and looked out over the broad acres that were his, the undulating slope of the mountains, slow subsiding to the sea, on one side, and on the other an immense series of gorges worn through the solid rock, which, extending for miles, ended abruptly, as if torn off, where the blue Pacific rollers beat against their feet.

All this lordly sweep of demesne was but a fraction of Rensdale's holding; he owned ranches in Puna and Kona, estates on the islands of Kauai and Maui; his cattle and sheep roamed a thousand hills; tabu fishponds, enclosed by lava causeways, the work of many patient hands of the centuries before, were his and the fullness thereof; mats and taro and labor also in tribute, for he was Alii—high-chief—a dignity descending through the female line, as was the ancient custom, and reaching him through his mother, a chiefess of Kohala. His father had been an American, son of one of the first missionaries to the Islands. New England ancestry spoke in his lean, well-shaped features, his slender build and the fairness of his skin; it gave a greater strength of purpose, a firmer executive, and a puritanical sense of right and wrong; but his

heart, his mode of thought, his soul belonged to the Polynesian mother who had made him lord among her people.

Rensdale was tired. He had had a bad night, and ever since dawn had sat on his veranda steps administering rude justice to his retainers, giving advice, settling disputes, explaining, scolding, or praising, as each case demanded—a task by no means easy. He sighed, as he rolled another cigarette of native tobacco. Two of his cow-boys galloped by in their high Mexican saddles, riding freely and easily to the stride of their sturdy ponies, their enormous spurs clattering at their bare heels; they disappeared over the rise, and the landscape seemed bare after their picturesque passing. The lazy boar-hounds went nosing about the yard, snuffing and slow; the stub-tailed Japanese cat came, purring, to rub against his leg. He looked down, smiled affectionately, and scratched the arched expectant back.

"It's lonesome, too,—hey, popo-ki?" he said, using the native version of "poor pussy" with which the Hawaiians have christened the little imported household animal—"Perhaps we won't always be so; we may—" he said slowly, and broke off with a shudder, as the sound of



"Perhaps we won't always be so lonesome; we may—"

wailing reached his ear—"More pilikeas!"—"more trouble"—he thought, wearily, and settled back in his chair.

Around the corner of the house came a strange cortège of weeping, distracted women and angry-faced men, jostling, pressing close about an armed escort, that surrounded a raw-boned burro, upon which, tied fast, sat as horrible a nightmare as ever human infirmities made real, a leper, far gone in the disease. He had no feet, and his hands were hardly more than rotting stumps, the watery frightened eyes looked out grotesquely from under lashless lids and hairless brows, the bald scaly head suggesting itself under the protecting native hat.

Rensdale recognized the grief-stricken family—they belonged to his clan, and had charge of a neighboring mullet pond; he knew the scene that was coming. His heart swelled; over and over again he had seen it, since the government had started the leper settlement on Molokai and had given orders that the pestilence must be isolated and the Islands cleaned of the Chinese disease. The natives could not be made to understand that it was for their good that the stricken must go. To them it was a wanton outrage, a cruel rending of family ties, a heartless, bloodless infamy. The whites they knew were at the bottom of it—they had influenced their kindly and righteous king, had cast spells upon him to make him do their will, and a deadly fear of the impassable, guarded cliffs and the unfordable, guarded sea of the settlement gripped their senses. Of the disease itself they had neither terror nor disgust; the first victim had been a chiefess, the second the king himself—who then should be ashamed?

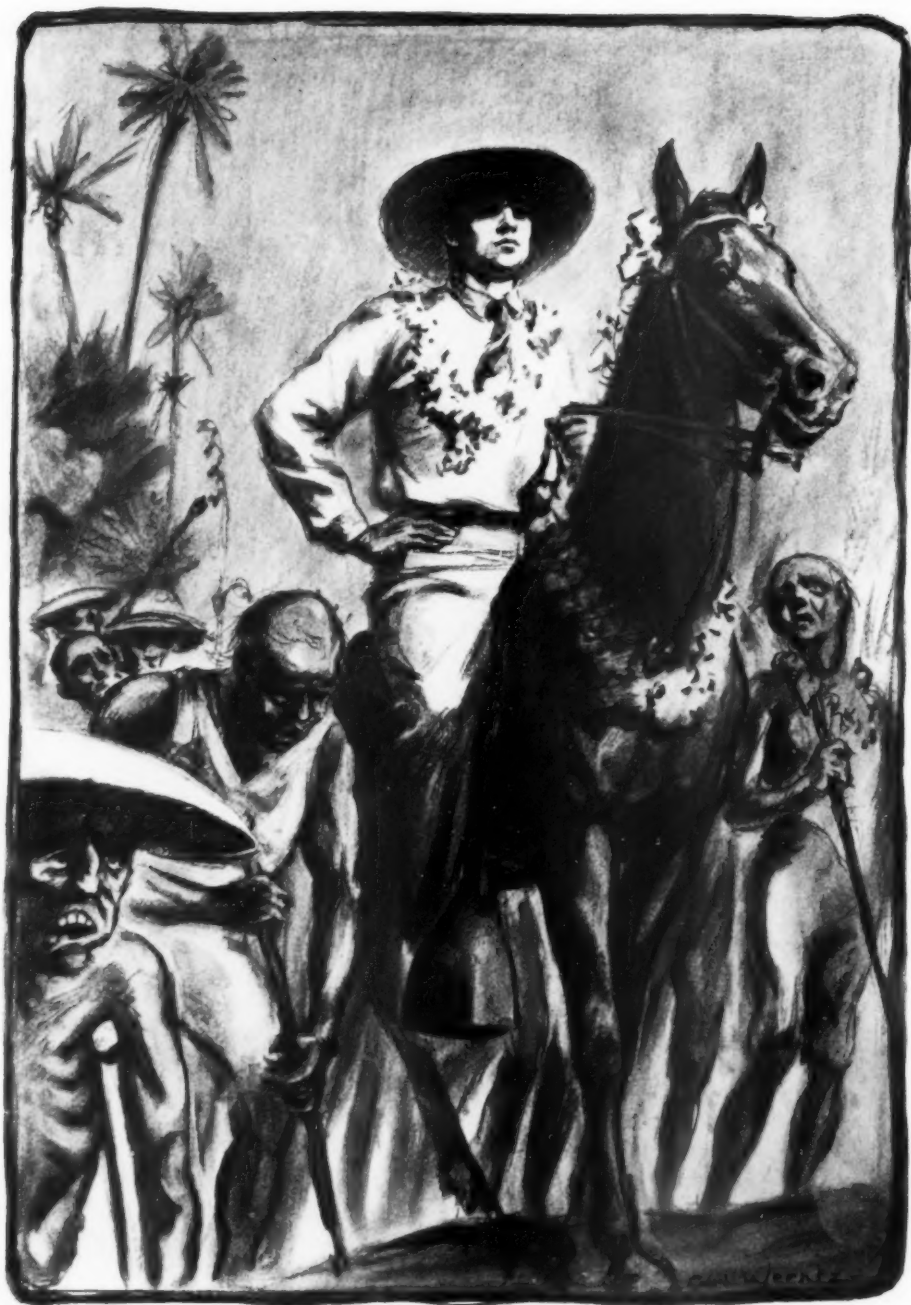
Rensdale drew himself together

for the ordeal, anticipating with a start of pain every word of the tragedy, the *dramatis personae* of which had just entered upon the stage; he had gone through it so often and had been compelled again and again to say to the poor wretches, "It is right; you must obey," and to the bereaved family, "You shall not interfere, you shall not lift a hand to defend your flesh and blood; say good-bye forever. Stand back and let him go."

A moment later the ground before the lanai was covered with prostrate humanity, imploring voices were raised to him as Alii to save and defend the sufferer. All they asked was justice—the man was sick, should he be left to die among strangers? Were not his own people to care for him? One offered his house for the leper, another volunteered to live there and care for the inmate if only he might be spared the horror of the Settlement, the trap the haoles had set. The soldiers stood by stolidly, they had no sympathy with hygienic schemes; they were heart and soul with the hunted, resisting fugitives, but also they were disciplined and knew that orders were to be obeyed.

Tears gathered in Rensdale's eyes. He turned his gaze away to the waving tops of the cocoanuts singing their little song to the trade winds. The praying voices paused a moment. He rose and spoke gently, going over the old ground.

"The king's will must be obeyed first and before all; what he commanded was wise, just, for the good of the country. The disease must be checked, and that could not be unless communication was cut completely between the unfortunate ones and the outer world. No hurt was intended; there would be fields on Molokai in which to cultivate the



"General of the strangest army that ever trod the earth."—See page 334.

taro, and fish for the catching. The government boats would bring food for such as could not help themselves. Already there were hundreds gathered there, it would not be lonely. There must be no fighting and no reviling; the inevitable must be accepted." Hopeless silence settled over his listeners; one by one they rose slowly from their prostrate position. The wailing had given place to heavy sobbing; the leper hung his formless chin upon his chest as if the weight of existence was too great to be borne.

The chief's heart bled for his people, but the descendant of the Puritans realized the necessity for concerted action with the authorities.

Rensdale turned to the white man and spoke in English. "You are to take him to the detention house, I suppose? Don't be hard; let his people talk with him and go through what ceremonies they please, provided they don't touch him. There's no use making them feel any worse about it than they do. I've tried to make them understand, I've told them not to give you any trouble." With a hasty farewell to the mournful caravan, he turned indoors, unable to see the dejected little procession of woe as it took its departure down the dusty road.

Sick to the very core of his being, he threw himself upon the huge native bed over which a fine Niihau mat, soft as silk, had been spread. He lay still for a few moments, but, growing restless, got up and paced the room, rolling the inevitable cigarette between his nervous fingers; he lit it and went on with his tramping and his thoughts. Oh, the pity of it all—the pity of it—poor simple folk, how were they to understand the wisdom of the course that seemed so cruel! Poor, frightened wretches! The progress of the dis-

ease was so slow, so bitterly slow—years and years and years. Luckily the sensibilities became blunted at last, but in the earlier stages they must bear all the sorrow and misery of the anticipation of exile, decay and death!

And the Settlement itself! He had spoken cheerfully and hopefully enough to the mourning company, but stories of lawlessness had reached him already from the outcast colony—the weaker left to rot, the stronger preying upon the possessions of the defenceless; for, though the native is by nature generous to a fault and kindly to a degree, yet with the progress of the "Parke disease" the bodily insensibility, the first indication of its presence, extends also to the feelings. Hideous chaos reigned in Molokai.

The Settlement was too new a thing to have worked out a plan of existence, and the governmental efforts were at long range. The work of weeding out had absorbed all the efforts of the community, and little thought was as yet given to the administration of law and justice in the fetid compound. Rensdale thought of the many cases he knew among his own people; it was his duty to deliver them over to the authorities; he shrank at the thought.

Sitting down heavily by the koa-wood table, he helped himself to a glass of native gin brought that morning by one of his retainers, picked up the book he had been reading the night before, and tried to shake off his depression. His head rested on one hand, the other lay extended straight before him on the table; he had taken a puff of the cigarette and laid it smoking on the edge of the plate under the okolehao bottle. The trades stole through the open door, rustling the papers on his desk, blowing the soft, straight hair

across his tired forehead, and, displacing the burning brand, rolled it against his outstretched hand.

There it lay, its fiery tip touching his forefinger. A moment passed; about the finger where the fire touched the skin a tiny circle of red and angry flesh bore testimony to the spark, but the man did not move. Presently he raised his hand, absently glancing across the room. His eyes idly turned to the table; they rested for the infinitesimal fraction of a second upon the familiar objects. Then his senses suddenly took note of the burned finger and the still smoking cigarette—with a hoarse cry he sprang to his feet.

His heart stopped beating, his soul gripped in agonized suspense—he clapped his hand across his mouth to keep back the convulsive scream that rose to his lips. Holding the injured hand before him, he looked with dilated pupils at the burn—the awful accusing burn of which he felt not the pain—no pain! Insensibility—the first awful manifestation of the scourge!

"Leper! Leper! Leper!" the words burst from his lips in a strange, unknown voice.

He gasped heavily, the room swam for a moment, then with a dash he threw back his chair. Into the kitchen wing he ran as one possessed, stumbling blindly over pails and brooms; the place was empty. He could hear the chop of the hatchet in the yard denoting the whereabouts of the Chinese cook. In the stove the fire burned steadily. With a quick glance at the door to assure himself that he was unobserved, he hurriedly lifted the stove-lid and thrust his hand into the blaze—he felt nothing!

Vacancy spread about him—he was vaguely conscious of the room and its furniture, of the water in the

wooden bowl with its floating coconut dipper, of the rows of neat packages on the shelves, of the pots and pans and kettles. His sub-conscious self, however, was active. Advancing to the pail he poured water over his burned and smoke-blackened hand, then, with a memory of early instructions, he found the butter, rubbed it over, sprinkled it with flour, and was in search of a rag when the cook returned.

"I've burned myself," he volunteered, dully; "got a cloth?"

The Chinaman dropped his load, and tearing a strip from a worn pillow-case in the linen closet, made a neat bandage.

"He must not guess," whispered the sub-conscious self. And Rensdale winced and wrung his hands in agony.

"Heap hurt, velly bad? How you catch him? More better bye and bye," the cook exclaimed.

He rushed from the servant's sympathy, out into the open air. All was unchanged, the wind whispered in the cocoanuts, the sun shone hot on the dusty road, back over the hill rode his two cow-boys driving a cow with a new-dropped calf. The air was strong and clear, the sky superbly blue, the ocean royally calm. The dogs leaped up and fawned upon him—he drew himself away in a supreme spasm of loneliness—not even the dogs must touch him—he was a leper!

His pony stood saddled at the gate; swinging himself up, he dug his heels into the willing little body and bolted off across the country at a killing pace; he passed in a whirl of dust, leaving the astonished cow-boys to wonder why he had turned the cow and sent her lumbering off back of the stable enclosure.

Presently he pulled up, trembling in every limb. A fit as of the ague

held him; he shook spasmodically, his teeth rattling against each other.

Gradually the terror passed, but in its place came realization, and there, alone, the man fought with his fate and conquered. The fierceness of that battle cannot be known, but if "he who ruleth himself is greater than he who taketh a city," surely the victory of Rensdale over all that man holds dear in life, merits at least the remembrance of his fellows.

Three hours later when he returned to the ranche, he had faced his future. Behind him forever he had put his freedom, the half-born hope of love that had been his, his friendship, his wealth and his royalty. Before him were imprisonment, a loathsome fellowship, a sacrifice to be made, a duty to be done. He knew that for many years to come, none would guess him unclean. For perhaps a decade he would be free to go and come, honored and sought after by all. Ten years more of life with all the good life has to give! The temptation has over-matched the strength of many a strong man.

But Rensdale's inheritance of native unselfishness and Puritan stoicism won! He realized how great would be his example, if he, Alii Nui, were to voluntarily give himself to the authorities; he knew that his voice would be heeded; that with the knowledge of his presence in the settlement the abhorrence and fear of the natives would be largely overcome, they would follow his lead, would feel that he was one of them, that the white man's trap was no longer to be resisted even to bloodshed. For their sakes and the sake of the land he loved he would go.

That day he put on gloves, and not till he stood on that other desolate shore did any see his slim flexible hands or feel their gentle sympathetic touch again. Slowly and

with agony of spirit Rensdale began the process of putting in order his multitudinous affairs; he made his will, disposing of his lands and possessions, securing to himself a small income to purvey to his needs and charities in the new world in which he was presently to take his place. From ranche to ranche he went, in each gathering the stricken to him, persuading and comforting.

Slowly he accumulated his following from Kauai and Maui, from Kona and Puna, wherever his voice was known and loved.

When all was ready, word was sent to the authorities in Hilo: "Send no one to take us by force, we are ready to give ourselves up. On such a day, at such an hour, have the steamer ready and we take ship for Molokai, I and such of my people as are afflicted."

That fateful day dawned, bright and beautiful, sweet with the breath of flowers, vigorous with the soul of the salt Pacific. Hilo Bay ruffled and spread its peacock colors; the palms of Cocoanut Island dipped to the wind. At anchor rode the little steamer, brown smoke throbbing from her funnel, blue waves softly slapping her rotund black sides; on the beach two long boats were drawn up, and beside them stood the Sanitary Commissioners, the Governor of the Island—all Rensdale's friends, both brown and white, and a great concourse of relatives of those about to embark—nearly the entire population of Hilo.

Everyone was laden with flower-wreaths and sweet mailie from the hills in long green streamers. Were it not for the drawn faces and the silence that enveloped the crowd, they might have been preparing for a feast. None had questioned Rensdale's word, he was above that, and not a man or woman but bent his

spirit in homage to a heroism far beyond his power to realize. The crowd waited in silence. Down the long white road following the curve of the bay, came a murmur, a beat of hoofs, a cloud of dust, and the caravan approached.

At the head rode the half-white chief on his favorite pony; he sat erect, head thrown back, his weary eyes gazing straight before him, the general of the strangest and most fearful army that ever trod the earth. Behind him it came straggling, on foot or horseback, in all stages of the disease, some loathsome beyond description; others showing only the slight rash and swellings that are the first outward marks of the scourge. Men, women and little children with a few sound and healthy natives willing to go into exile and certain death, rather than be parted from those they loved. A hideous and magnificent pageant! The lowest of bodily vileness, the highest of spiritual renunciation! A picture that those who saw never forgot, and of which in after years they never spoke without tears, for it shook the lives of men to their foundations.

The lepers halted by the boats and amid a death-like stillness their names were given and written down by the commissioners; the boats were manned, and one by one the doomed embarked. Until the keel of the

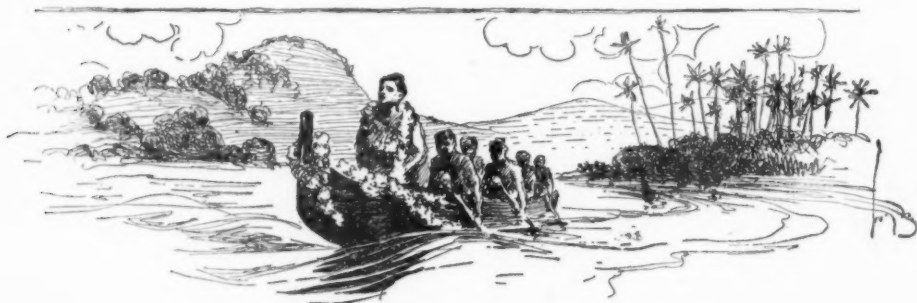
first boat rode free, and the oars touched the lapping water, not a sound was heard. Then broke forth a cry that would have melted the hearts of the very hills! The crowd scattered and rushed waist-deep into the water, calling and weeping. The boat was well-nigh swamped in flowers thrown pell-mell.

The second boat left the sand amid the same wild demonstrations of grief, and the multitude watching, saw the tiny barks bobbing cheerily over the iridescent waters, till they paused in the shadow of the waiting steamer.

The ghastly freight was taken aboard and the boats turned shoreward once more, creeping on flashing oars over the blue bay. Again they made the tragic trip, till Rensdale stood, last of the exiles, upon the glimmering crescent of Hilo. Never again should he set eyes upon those green hills, nor see the snows of Mauna Loa! Never again should he ride across his fertile ranches, nor guide his pony through the tangled jungle trails; never again look face to face in the eyes of his friends and his people!

For an instant his dusky face went white as the foam on the beach at his feet, a quiver passed over his body as he turned seaward.

The keel of the last boat grated on the sand; he did not look back, but



"In such wise did Rensdale go to his martyrdom."

advanced to meet it mechanically.

"Rensdale!" exclaimed the Governor, and springing to his side he clasped one of the thickly-gloved hands. The exile gripped it convulsively, then his arms fell limp at his sides. He turned his eyes to the Governor's face for an instant, tried to speak, and turned away.

The most beautiful leis had been saved for him; his Charon bark was smothered in roses, in carnations,

leuhua and mailie. He seated himself, but never turned his head, sternly facing the future—and Molo-kai!

From the crowd there broke a savage cry—the wailing for a chief! It rose and swelled and sank, heart-breaking and soul-stirring! "The chief is dead! Auwe! Auwe! The chief is dead!"

And in such wise did Rensdale go to his martyrdom.

The Golden Opportunity

From *Reminiscences of the Girlhood of*
Gwladwys Struyver

EDITED BY ELIZABETH PHIPPS TRAIN

In a former chapter of my reminiscences I took the public into my confidence concerning an episode in my social career over which Comus took it upon himself to preside. This was not the sole occasion upon which he condescended, for my good or otherwise, to interest himself in my affairs. There was that other time when I thought to become Mrs. Bobby Tremlett. To this day I cannot think of it without laughing.

Bobby was so rich, and for a long time was so obviously meditating matrimony, that he was known about town as "The Golden Opportunity." Every mother of marriageable daughters and with sufficient social pretensions to aspire, had him marked down for capture, and mamma, herself, was very kind to him.

"Poor boy," she would say to me, in that tone of unctuous sympathy which she reserves for the discussion of plutocratic vicissitudes, "it seems so hard that he has no parents, and that, with all that money, he should have no real home. Greenlawns? A

magnificent estate, my dear, but no home. How could it be that, with no woman to preside over it?"

And when Bobby called, in those brief intervals before she suddenly remembered some pressing need for her attention elsewhere, which should leave the entire burden of his entertainment upon my hands, she would descant, with an almost passionate enthusiasm, upon the joys of domestic life. I used to think sometimes, that her protestations would have carried greater weight if she had been able to show her own hearthstone adorned by its legitimate proprietor; the fact being, that, for some reason, never to me explained, my father had not found domestic life so engaging as mamma depicted it, and had severed his connection with our household at a point in my career before memory became firmly established in me.

Now, Bobby Tremlett is as dear a little chap as ever lived, and I've known and liked him well for a long time, and his attractions may be said

to be substantial and, to the average woman, undoubtedly fascinating. But Bobby stammers like a hen trying to give expression to her jubilation over the accomplishment of that everyday fact for which she was obviously created, and to live with a stammering man would be, it seems to me, like falling victim to a chronic attack of the hiccups. Why, it used to make me shiver just to hear Bobby try to say my name.

"G-g-g-g-g-lad-wys." Cut, cut, cut, cut, cadacut. Oh, it was awful! Think of having to hear that a hundred times a day, in accents of joy and grief, love and anger! And then, the time it would take from one's other engagements just to stand and wait for him to deliver himself perhaps of a mere desire that I should see to having his buttons sewed on! I believe that is popularly supposed to be the main subject of conversation between husbands and wives.

Still, as something in mamma's tones, when the ultimate fate of Bobby and his millions came up for discussion between us, dared me to refuse him if I ever got the chance, I, being confessedly a coward in the face of mamma's solicitude for my future welfare, was obliged seriously

to contemplate the constant association of my name with new-laid eggs, or to avoid such a distressing relation of ideas by casting about in my mind for a nickname that should begin with a vowel.

For Bobby certainly did seem immensely *épris*. He pursued me into corners at balls, he kept our house

fragrant with roses from Greenlawns, he accepted all mamma's invitations to dine, which in itself means a good deal in the way of devotion; for mamma will economise on her wines, being of the opinion that an unnecessary fuss is made over vintages, and that, mixed with food, nine persons out of ten cannot distinguish between the sheep and goats of Bacchus. Which may be true, but, as I tell her, it's rather rough on the tenth man. And he obviously had something on his mind in regard to me, for whenever we happened to get alone together his face grew the

color of Geof Daggett's, whom they call the "Blush Rose," because, when a girl said to him one day that she should think he'd knock off drinking as it must hurt to be as red as that, he replied that 'twas nothing to do with drinking, but his was a shy nature and the blush rose whenever he



"'Poor boy,' she would say."

looked at a pretty woman. She told him that the sight of pretty women must be a fixed habit with him, and she repeated the story and the name got established.

I was not a little disturbed in my mind just then over Bobby's apparent intentions, because, at the moment, I was occupied with an affair with Conway Stuart, an affair so absolutely impossible as to tax all my ingenuity with mamma, and to keep me exquisitely tortured with a mingling of excitement and despair. Conway is a protégé of Mrs. Cri Forbes, and she has done wonders in the way of launching him in society, for no one knows whether he ever had parents, and as to money, he doesn't pretend even to bonbons. He's a charmer of the first water, however, and beautiful as the day. Mamma says his attractions are wholly superficial, and I suppose they are. He needs capitalizing. I don't see why that wouldn't be a good enterprise to undertake. Make him a gamble. A thousand shares,



"As dear a little chap as ever lived."

at a hundred per. The girl who drew him would not only get a lovely household ornament, but a snug fortune as well.

Mamma asked him one day, when she returned unexpectedly early from a zenana lecture and caught him taking my pulse (I had felt symptoms of grippe and he is very clever at homeopathic remedies, if mamma would only believe it), if he had any business or profession, and what it might be. When he thawed out enough to speak, he said he had both, of a sort. He was a leather polisher, besides being an expert on bricks. She seemed a little less contemptuous of him after that, but has never been able to acquire any satisfactory information as to his business associates.

I don't think mamma was afraid I'd really ever do anything foolish, marry a man for love or anything like that, but she had Bobby and his millions very much at heart, and she was afraid that too much tame cat about the house on the part of Conway

might scare off her fat mouse. And, as I had agreed to second her efforts to entrap Bobby (that sounds coarse, but it's only to carry out the metaphor), and I believe in playing fair in all games, I dropped a hint in Conway's ear that gave him a clue to the situation, and like an honorable man, he suggested of his own accord, intermitting his attentions to me until our design (There it is again! What awfully vulgar words I do run up against to-day!)—I mean until my marriage with Bobby should be an accomplished fact. Which shows more plainly than any amount of protestation on my part, what sort of man Conway Stuart is, and what a nice sense of the fitness of things he possesses.

So Bobby was allowed to have it all his own way, and his own way became so agitated and *empresé* that, without his suspecting my motive, I began to practice him on certain easily-spoken "little names," as the French call them, although I found it awfully difficult to discover many appropriate and euphonious ones beginning with a vowel. I asked him one day what word in the language was easiest for him to pronounce, and he said "ass." Which didn't help me much.

I finally hit upon Essie, short for Esther, which was one of the names by which I was christened in honor of my father's mother, who, it was supposed, would leave me money therefor. As she failed to live up, or perhaps I should say, die down to mamma's expectations and the name lacks distinction, it was allowed to lapse from my person. Before I decided to make use of it again, I had a long debate with myself as to whether, in my conjugal relations, it would be more endurable to be reminded of the fruit of the barnyard or of a soda-water siphon. As my

associations with the latter were of rather an agreeable nature, I decided to settle upon Essie.

It came to be the first of June, and Bobby had grown to be so full of his unconfessed secret that I told mamma I simply couldn't stand his spluttering attempts to relieve himself of it any longer. She must come to the fore and give him a good and effective lead. And so that excursion to Greenlawns, down on the Sound, was planned; a day in the country for us three alone, an afternoon "near to Nature's heart," as mamma poetically phrased it—"with millions in it," was my vulgar *post scriptum*.

Poor mamma! How excited and happy she was that morning as we started for that bourne from which no traveler had ever, as yet, had the luck to return mistress! There was something almost pathetically simple in the way she played up to Bobby's hand, and the intonations of the voice with which she addressed him were those of true and yearning motherhood. Never, too, had she brooded me so solicitously, and so deferred to my opinions. I should never have known the eye with which she regarded me for the same optic which had X-rayed Conway Stuart's ministrations upon my pulse. It was to that, what the eye of the Sistine Madonna would be to one of Argus. Beneath her benevolence, Bobby expanded into such fluency of discourse that, by the time we reached the station for Greenlawns, my nerves were as fatigued as if I had been assisting at a display of pyrotechnics. And even mamma looked a bit wan.

She brightened up, however, at sight of the smart trap that awaited us, and by the time we drew up to the terrace of the beautiful Georgian house, she had quite recovered her-

self. Her manner to the housekeeper who came forward to receive us was a wonderful mixture of affability and "My foot is on my native heath, and my name's McGregor" assurance, and when we were left to our own restorative devices in the chamber to which Mrs. Martyn conducted us, she approached and took my face between her palms, pressing a tender kiss upon my forehead in a manner that was, in itself, a benediction.

"Dear child," she breathed, with almost religious fervor; "dear child! Ah, Gwladwys, what it is to bear children, and to establish them satisfactorily!"

A throb of deep delight moved my soul. I drew away from her caress.

"Oh, mamma," I exclaimed, ecstatically, "is it terrapin I smell? Oh, can it be, do you think?" And then suddenly I remembered a former disappointment. "Oh, dear, it's that horrid old *Crème Veloutée* you

use! I do wish you'd try something else. These repeated disappointments are hard to bear."

But, though terrapin was not of it, our luncheon was otherwise fit for the gods, and might have tempted a chameleon. I am a bit *gourmet*, I

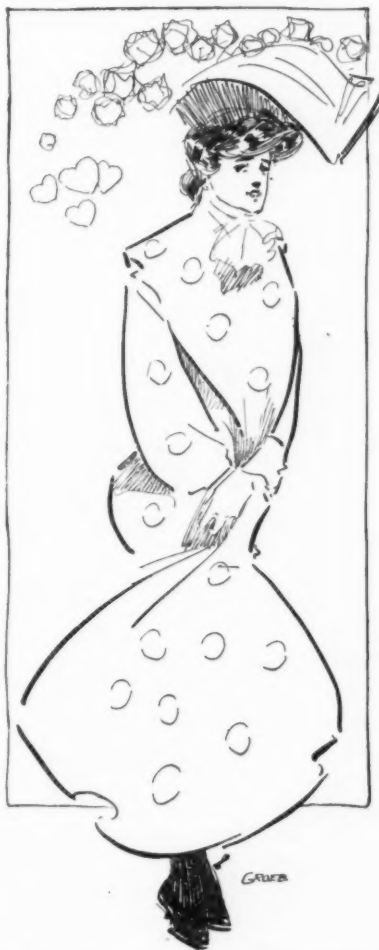
confess it, and I don't think I have ever been so tenderly inclined toward Bobby as I was that day, after partaking of the twentieth century ambrosia with which his people furnished us. And when we finally withdrew from table and wandered

out upon the terrace at the back of the house, which descends by broad marble steps to that lovely Italian garden which has made Greenlawns famous, I felt myself in one of those giving moods, when it behooves one's guardian angel to watch out, lest an ill-advised petition be laid at one's feet.

Mamma is a very robust person, and few old soldiers could rival her endurance in a campaign. But she perfectly understands when to husband her strength in order to husband her daughter, and that interval after luncheon, when I was obviously purring like a sleek cat and Bobby was as obviously eager to secure my undi-

vided attention, occurred to her as a proper occasion for recuperation.

"No, no, Mr. Tremlett," she returned, to Bobby's suggestion that we should all stroll down into the garden, "you and dear Gwladwys go. If you will allow me, I shall rest a



"My mind was pleasantly occupied."

bit in the morning-room. Railway travel is a little, just a little fatiguing at my age, you know, and champagne in the middle of the day carries its own revenge with it. If I should happen just to doze off, eh?" Her smile at her own expense was of a geniality to disarm the most prejudiced anti-mother-in-lawist.

Bobby's gratitude for her consideration was so manifest as to have been capable of wounding the vanity of one more a woman and less a strategist than my mother. He deposited her upon the most comfortable lounge, arranged the shades to the proper degree of light, searched the book-shelves for the most somnolent bit of literature, and nearly reduced her to the condition of Desdemona by his abundant and clumsily assiduous application of downy pillows.

She may have been comfortable when he got through with her, but certainly she did not look it. A fat woman in a walking-suit, reclining at mid-day on a lounge, bolstered and padded and wadded about with gayly embroidered cushions, with the evidence of having lunched more completely than with discretion apparent in her veins and respiration, is not one of the most enviable spectacles on this fair earth. But I did not melt in sympathy toward her, for I felt that she was sending me to my doom, and was reasonably sure that the moment we were out of sight she would cast those pillows to the winds, hoist herself from the couch, and mount to an upper chamber, where, with loosened gown and a more comfortable disposition of her person, like Sister Anne upon the house-top, she would occupy herself in spying out over the land.

Bobby Tremlett is a fair little man with sandy hair and moustache. His skin is of a delicacy comparable only to the trite simile of a conch-shell.

When he undergoes emotion of any sort, he is no longer pink but maroon, to his ear-tips, and even, one suspects, to the nethermost parts of his person. Emotion, likewise, affects his tear-glands, so that his gray eyes become suffused, like oysters bathed in their own liquor, while his speech, which Fate has so cruelly handicapped, becomes, to his listeners, an affliction most awful to endure. As we descended the broad marble steps, and turned into one of the box-bordered paths, from these now strongly apparent indications, I inferred that he was suffering from a high degree of nervous susceptibility. He turned to me with a liquid smile.

"Ler-ler-let's go to the P-p-p-per-g-g-go——"

"Pergola, Bobby?" I offered, wishing to save him and myself, likewise, the third syllable. I was in the habit of finishing out difficult and obvious words for him, and he wasn't in the least sensitive in regard to his infirmity. He nodded.

"Yes. Ler-ler-let's go there," he said. "It's j-jolly and k-k-k——"

"Quiet," I supplied. And we wended our way along the bordered paths and through the stiffly-cropped shrubs and evergreens to the distant Pergola, the marble statues and columns of which glared dazzlingly white in the strong sunshine of early summer. The place was enchanting, and as I strolled, mechanically supplementing my companion's defective speech, my mind was pleasantly occupied with various attempts I should make, further "to paint the lily and gild refined gold," when I should become mistress of that lovely domain.

The Pergola reached, Bobby spread a rug that he carried, over the lid of one of the marble sarcophagi with which the place was adorned, and suggested that we



"He seemed to have fallen into a state of inaction and embarrassment."

should sit upon it. When I had disposed myself as comfortably as might be on the place of sepulture, he took a seat beside me, and turned his bivalvular optics upon mine.

"G-g-g-wladwys," he began. I laid my hand on his arm. I simply hadn't the nerve to stand that awful struggle, constantly repeated.

"Bobby," I said, "you won't mind my suggesting to you that I have another name much easier for you to speak than Gwladwys, will you?

Did you know that my middle name was Esther? Indeed, it used to be my first name, and some old-fashioned relatives still call me Essie." I daresay this might have been true, but I couldn't at the moment have named the offenders.

He smiled and nodded good-naturedly.

"It's a b-b-bully name, Essie," he remarked. "I c-c-can say it ler-ler-like a streak." Whereat we both laughed.

"Well, then," said I, "let it be Essie in future."

"All right," he assented, "just as you say, G-g-g—"

"Essie," I interposed.

"Essie dear," he supplemented, and we grinned inanely at each other, I trying, in the face of those swollen veins and swimming eyes, to feel duly sentimental, and he, it seemed to me, endeavoring, rather unsuccessfully, to screw his courage up to the sticking point.

The spot was fair and charming. Roses bloomed about us, for the month was that dedicated by Flora to the most entrancing of her daughters. Bees hummed drowsily in the shrubbery, and on the face of the centuries-old dial that held the place of honor in a garden where Petrarch might have wooed his Laura, the sun was about his business of time-server, his face smiling broadly and genially likewise upon the gleaming statues of nymphs and dryads with which the place abounded. It was lovely, lovely, but it was also soporific, and I felt myself forced to conceal a yawn born of midday dietetic intemperance behind a big, full-blown La France which Bobby had plucked for me, and to wish that, for Goodness' sake, Bobby would hurry up and get on with his job.

He seemed, however, to have fallen into a state of complete inaction and embarrassment, and I came to the conclusion that if I really had made up my mind to become Mrs. Robert Tremlett, I had just got to take the matter into my own hands, break the ice and give Bobby a little bit of a push toward the fatal plunge. I let my eyes roam a moment or two longer over the exquisite bit of transplanted Italian landscape, as if searching out its beauties, and then turned quite innocently to him.

"Bobby," said I, as ingenuously as if the idea had but just occurred to me, "don't you ever mean to give this lovely place a mistress?"

His face lighted up, and I saw in a

moment that the opening was just what he had been trying to discover for himself. An anticipatory shiver ran through me. I had forgotten that I had got to take the plunge with him. He squirmed for a moment nervously about on the marble slab and then, very properly, laid hold of my hand.

"Th-th-that's what I wanted to, spub-bub-peak to you about, G-g-g-Essie," he burst forth impetuously; that is, as impetuously as was possible to him. "I wanted to tut-tut-tell you th-th-that I was in lul-lul-lul-lul——"

"Love?" I put in, as archly as I could compass under the circumstances. He nodded.

"Yes," he assented, "I'm awf'ly in lul-lul-lul——"

"Love," I reiterated. He nodded again, patting my hand gratefully.

"I've bub-bub-been wanting to tut-tut-tell you for a long time, G-g-g——"

"Essie," I corrected, smiling faintly, and feeling my nerves giving way. It was much worse than I had expected. "Why didn't you, Bobby?"

He grinned deprecatingly.

"I'm such a bub-bub-bub——" (I couldn't guess this and had to let him get out of it by himself) "I'm such a bub-bub-bub—I'm such a bub-bub-bub—— Oh, d-d-damn it all! I'm such a bub-bub-bub-bashful chap, don't you know!" What a mouse to be delivered of! I thought he was going to say beast, at least.

"Were you afraid I didn't care for you, then?" I asked, trying for a tender tone.

He shook his head.

"Oh, n-n-no," he said. "I n-n-knew you lulla-lulla-liked me all right, bub-but I was afraid you mum-mum-might not care about mum-mum-mum——"

"Marrying," I suggested, gently. Again he shook his head.

"About mum-mum-mum——"

"About you? Enough to marry you, do you mean?"

For a second he gazed at me blankly. Then he burst out laughing.

"N-n-not on your lul-lul-life," he ejaculated. "I sh-sh-shouldn't bub-bub-be such an ass as to expect th-that. Just give me time and I'll gug-get it out. About mum-mum-Miss C-c-clancy——"

"Miss who?" I exclaimed, sitting up in earnest.

"Mum-mum-mum-Miss Clancy," he repeated. "You n-n-know, d-don't you? In 'Bub-bub-beauty and the Bub-bub-beast.' I'm gug-gug-going to mum-mum-marry her as soon as her engug-gug-gagement with Kuk-kuk-Klaw and Erlanger is over."

I gazed at him a moment. I simply hadn't anything to say. Then a foolish thought occurred to me.

"What's her name, Bobby?" I asked. "Her first name, I mean."

He smiled fatuously. It was easy to see he was far gone.

"Astra," he replied, seeming to fondle the name with his voice.

"Means st-tut-tar, you know. She tut-tut-took it when she wuw-wuw-went on the stut-tut-tage."

"Lovely! And you can call her Assie," I remarked.

He nodded, with a grin.

"Then it's all right, dear boy," I said heartily. "Proceed to pour your heart into mine now, and at any time you may need a confidante. But give me the pleasure of telling mamma, won't you? It will be such a pleasant piece of news to unfold to her this evening, when we sit about the hearth in our tea-gowns, resting after this happy day in the country!"

He agreed, and that's all there is to it. There are some things too sacred to unveil even to a kindly-disposed public. That disclosure, and mamma's reception of it, must ever be allowed to dwell in the secret recesses of my memory.



The Doll with Strings

BY RICHARD HENRY POST

There was absolutely no reason why he should have gone to the county convention, much less to the state, but such was the accident of politics. The county belonged to the other party as much as the state did to his, and it was to no one's interest to attend. At the city caucus three old-time members of the party, wheel-horses since the war, had been elected delegates; and then, in want of any other, Gray's name was added by the boss of the ward. It was only a question of paying railroad fare to the convention, and for this empty honor there was little competition. But the boy, just twenty-one, felt the responsibility of the situation and determined to go, though he vaguely understood that in so doing he was supposed to be "good," in the sense that John Watkins, the leader of the Fourth, understood it.

Through the hot hours of a Saturday he sat in a court-room chair, far back among the delegates, and listened to the transaction of the perfunctory business of the convention, and the "ringing resolutions" which, cut from an Eastern newspaper and typewritten, gave the opportunity for a very strained oratorical effort on the part of the chairman. Then came the nomination of wooden candidates who smiled wearily, and wondered by what majority they would be beaten. Gray voted with his ward, and the boss grinned good-naturedly; not that it mattered, but he had been looking over the young man and had come to the conclusion that there might be political possibilities in him, provided of course—he did not

add the words even to himself; it was too well understood.

Not a saving breath of wind came in through the narrow windows; the heat hung in the air, and with it the dust, a fine haze in the sunlight of the room. Gray was falling into a half-dozzle with many others of the delegates who, not expecting nominations and filled with the sense of having done their duty, were politics-weary. He sat bolt upright with a start. The chairman had read his name in the list of state delegates. Then in the reaction he smiled at his childishness; he and twenty-one—it must be some other Gray.

The boss touched his shoulder. "Nice trip," he said, "only eleven of us," and he smiled a watchful smile. With a ring of ayes the convention accepted the delegates, and before Gray was fully aware of what was happening, a motion to adjourn was through and he was stumbling over fallen chairs, carried by the rush of men into the street. Not instructed, for the boss of the Fourth had thought it better to wait.

In the three weeks that elapsed between the Lake County convention and the meeting of the delegates at the state capital, the situation underwent a hundred rapid changes. What had promised early in the month to be only a spectacular formality, to gratify the pride of the party, had become a bitter struggle. The great senator, instead of setting up a paste-board man for his constituents to nominate, and staying on the field to see that it was done, had taken himself off to his seaside home to let his puppets fight

among themselves for the honor of the nomination.

It was rumored that the senator did not smile as confidently in private as in public, and that he entertained a fear that the people were tiring of his rule and that the opposition might ride into power on an awakened public indignation. It had been a notorious administration, with wholesale steals of public rights, and noisome scandals in the state government. In particular, the inhabitants of the largest city in the state, for an act of insubordination, had lost their political rights and from now on were to be ruled by a board appointed by the governor.

Because of all this, the senator had decided to allow the people to elect their own chief executive for a change. Not that he meant to lose that state patronage and power. His friends, at the instigation of a letter or two, put forward a doll-like candidate, irreproachable in private life, a student, and a thinker; but as helpless as a little child in the bewildering political game in which he was to be the center-piece—such a man, in his high-minded ignorance,

as is the delight and opportunity of the politician.

Many of the lower counties, and the western part of the state, had instructed for Judge Dayrell, but from the great city had come forth

another candidate who, with the best newspapers in the state behind him, and the thinking public sentiment, was bringing anxiety to the machine leaders and making the senator sit longer over his breakfast coffee as, at Arlington-by-the-Sea, he read the newspapers of his home-state. There were other candidates; one, a farmer from the pine woods, had half a dozen counties in his carpet-bag which he brought out for the first time in thirty years when he came to the convention. Then there were favorite sons from many counties, mayors, and prosecuting attorneys, who hoped that in the confusion of balloting, some votes might slip to them, and dreamed



"Dick Gray had come for the trip."

of the huzzas of the presentation, and the black print of their names in the vote column. Thus, by the morning of the twenty-eighth of July, when the eleven men from Lake County arrived in the capital, it was

an important delegation in its own estimation and in the eyes of the state.

Dick Gray was blissfully unconscious of all this as he carried his dress-suit case up the straggling main street of the capital on the day before the convention. He had come for the trip, and to watch the excitement of the convention. He knew vaguely that some in the delegation were whispering about throwing the vote of the county to Miles Strong, the candidate of the great city, but they had not as yet approached him.

In a confectioner's doorway he saw a girl in a blue and white dress, with big speaking eyes, and a mass of brown curls. He was vaguely conscious in the uncertain way we muster memories, that he had seen her before, in some far-away forgotten time when the incidents are gone and only the dim sweetness of the outline remains. He was not certain enough of it to speak to her, but she greeted him.

"Why Dick Gray," she was saying. There was a silvery ring to her voice such as he had once before heard. "Why Dick, it's you, very truly you. I couldn't be more surprised. Where did you come from and when?"

She poured out the words in a tumultuous rush of delight, so real and unfeigned that the boy felt a pang of reproach at not remembering her. He knew her, he remembered a summer, three, four, some number of years ago, when he was but seventeen—a summer at a lake where the water-lilies grew on the still edge of the pond, and the swaying branches of the trees nodded at their reflection in the quiet water. For a week he had known her, a week of summer nights and lazy rows, with only a ripple of the water

against the bow as a chaperon, a week of long tramps after blackberries. How well he remembered reading to her in the shade of the bushes, and stopping now and then to pick for her the dark, rich fruit. Even the names of the fiction people that had wandered before their eyes came back to him. Yes, he knew her now, Betty Dayrell. With a wave of surprise and interest he connected her with something else, a name on the bill-board across the street. Her father must be the candidate.

The girl blushed as she followed his eyes. "Yes, it's papa," she said, "he's going to be elected, I'm very sure."

"He's going to make a great run," answered Gray, and then he went on faster, "Betty, why I never thought of you. I've heard his name a dozen times, but I didn't remember you lived in this state. I'm so glad I came. It makes it seem like another July."

"Like another July," she repeated, with a dream of memories in the depths of her brown eyes, and then they stepped into the cool of the confectionery shop.

The Lake County delegation held a caucus the night before the convention, at which a very extraordinary thing happened. Watkins, the boss of the Fourth, was in consultation with the senator's representatives that night, Ward and Baker, the United States marshals, and Briggs, the deputy collector. He never imagined that the caucus would not wait for him. But when at 7.30 they met, and the eleventh delegate was absent, the Strong men called the meeting and almost in a flash the delegates were instructed for their candidate. Gray voted with them. He had been reading the independent newspapers, and he

was beginning to see the situation in its true aspect. Like a man in the dark, who follows even the faintest glimmer of light, he cast his vote for Strong.

When Watkins hurried up the steps to the caucus-room at ten minutes past eight, only a few stragglers remained.

"Support Strong," he yelled, in a passion of cursing fury, "why, it's going to be a close fight; there's so much" — he closed and unclosed his fingers twice — "in it, if we can swing it for Dayrell. Do you hear?" he yelled, in a red-faced passion of anger, and then he stopped suddenly, and with almost a moan fell into a chair.

After the convention had been called to order in the morning, and the temporary and then the permanent chairman had worn out the energy of the delegates with the generous platitudes on national issues, and skillful avoidance of state, the platform was adopted, a cut and dried affair, eulogizing everyone except the opposite

party, and condemning itself in its omissions. This over, the delegates straightened in their seats, threw off their coats, and detached their cuffs. It was to be a fight, and they knew it.

Slowly down the list of counties the teller went until he came to Lake. "Eleven for Strong," yelled Jacob Brant, the chairman of the night before.

"Demand a poll," answered Watkins, and from all sides of the convention the cry went up from the Dayrell men, "Poll the vote."

The chairman rapped for order. "Mr. Teller, call the delegates of the county."

Watkins smiled self-satisfactorily. He knew his men and his eye was upon them. Down the line they went, Strong or Dayrell, and Gray felt the teller coming



"He saw a girl in a blue and white dress."

to his name. He had only to turn his head to the left and see Betty, sitting there, watching him and thinking of her father. He could not look at her. Watkin's eyes were on him as his name was called.

"Strong," he answered, in a low voice.

The teller paused with uplifted pen.

"What's that," said Watkins, in a hoarse whisper, "what's that, Gray?"

The glance of the brown eyes flushed his face a burning red, for he knew she was looking at him, blaming him with every flutter of the lids. He answered in a louder voice, "Strong," and this time the teller counted his vote. Watkins fell back in his seat and drew his broad handkerchief over his face. Lake County stood eleven for Strong, for the unit rule was the law of the convention, and no county could divide its vote.

The first ballot stood: Dayrell, 184; Strong, 156; Myers, 54; Scattering, 20, making a total of 414 votes, of which 208 were necessary to a nomination.

Twenty-four needed to elect him. The Dayrell men whispered together and at once attacked the scattering favorite-son candidates of the northern counties. Two or three flopped to Dayrell on the early ballots but the majority went to Strong. Myers was holding his own. Indeed, on the last ballot before adjournment, Weed County, a little sandy square in the north of the state that had gone to Dayrell on the second ballot, now threw its three votes over to Myers. Dayrell 191; Strong 162; Myers 57; and a stray prosecuting attorney 3 was the result of the last ballot.

The line must be broken somewhere. The senator was keeping the wires hot with money but it seemed to do little good. Ward telegraphed at eight that evening, "Don't send any more money. Got twenty thousand and these farmers won't sell out."

Myers had turned down a big offer just before supper and had inti-

mated pretty strongly that if he heard of its being repeated his vote would be thrown to Strong. His delegates were fellow farmers, many of them war veterans like himself, and their ranks could not be broken. They disliked Strong because he was from a large city, but they would not vote for Dayrell. Still there were the wandering three, who might be prevailed upon to come back again, and the vote of the prosecuting attorney's delegates would give them six. Before the evening of the second day, the changes were made and the Dayrell vote had risen to 197. "Only got ten thousand left," Ward telegraphed that night, "and though we're some better, we're in a tight hole. If we can't win to-morrow, we won't, that's all."

Ward called his men together at dinner that evening, a short, rapid dinner during which the politicians ate little and talked much. "We've got to win to-morrow. You know we can't hold them any longer. Some of the Eaton and White people are getting restless, and if there ever comes a break, it's all up with us. Say they're tired staying—something about their crops, you know—and that if we don't hurry up, they're going to vote for Strong and end it. We got to win on the first ballot to-morrow."

The silence which followed was broken by Baker. "I guess it's up to you, Watkins," he said, "can't control your own county and yet say you're in the push. If we only had Lake it would be simple, dead simple; why, it would nominate him," he added, scrawling the figures on the back of an envelope.

"That damned boy," the boss of the Fourth threw out his words in spasmodic anger. "We put some of the other fellows on just to make it

look natural you know, but I thought this kind was safe." He drove his fingers together in a hard purple knot.

"How much do you think he will come at?" asked Ward, eyeing him restlessly.

"Don't know if he will come at all," said the boss of the Fourth, viciously biting at the end of an unlighted cigar. "That's the hard lines. Don't believe that he will, but we might try."

"No man lives, at least no politician," the other sneered, "who won't come if you come high enough."

Gray was tightening his four-in-hand before a mirror when a knock sounded on the door. He was tired of politics and he was going to see Betty. Indeed, the convention to him had only been intermissions between Betty and Betty again. She had not even blamed him for his vote, though he had read a little sorrow in her eyes. The knock sounded again on the door, and he threw on his coat before he opened it.

He half expected the politicians, and yet he groaned to himself as he saw them. He was only a boy, and they were not half as interesting as Betty. They took seats without his requesting them, and he threw himself on the edge of the bed.

"Well, gentlemen, what is it?" he asked impatiently after a moment.

They were generally fluent talkers, but in the presence of this boy with the blue four-in-hand and the honest, innocent eyes they hesitated.

"We've come to talk to you about the convention," said Baker.

"Yes," broke in Watkins, hurriedly, "we want you to vote for Dayrell."

"I've half imagined so myself," said Gray, but he alone smiled at his words.

"Now cut that out, Dick Gray," Watkins went on angrily, "you've played it pretty bold up to now, but it's got to end. What do you suppose I put you on for, anyway—to vote for that fool Strong? Not by a damn sight. We want you to turn that vote of yours, and to-morrow, do you hear?" The face of the boss was beet red in his anger.

"What if I don't," answered Gray. They did not hear his reply, for the smooth, oily voice of Ward broke in upon the other's wrath. "Mr. Gray," he was saying, "I know my friend Watkins did not mean what he was saying. I trust you will not take offense. He is not fully responsible for the way he expresses himself to-night."

The boss of the Fourth tried to rise, his face a livid red, but Baker held him down. Ward went on as if not noticing them.

"But I think you can see, Mr. Gray, that it will be greatly to your advantage and also to that of the state, that you should vote for Judge Dayrell. He is undoubtedly the ablest and best man that has been proposed for a number of years. We are certain that the party in the state has seldom been so ably represented in a candidate. As an orator and a statesman Judge Dayrell is unsurpassed. It would certainly be to your interest to vote for him. Again, the farmers are getting tired; you know it's rather a bad time for them, this July weather, and you will do them a great favor if you vote to get it adjourned."

He watched Gray's face between his narrow lids. The boy was interested, he saw that. Gray did not move. His mind was made up, though a far more potent reason was pleading with him.

"Now Gray," the smooth-faced speaker went on, "I know you're no

more of a fool than I am; you'll do it seeing that it is for the interest of the party and the state," he winked significantly, "if there's enough in it for you. That's all. Now we're not in this for fun, neither are you. Here's a key to the safety deposit vault box 23 in the Second National. You'll find five thousand in it and you can get it the first thing in the morning—after you've voted." He tossed the delicate key in the air and caught it with a turn of his hand. He held it out between the ends of his fingers.

The boy had grown white and red by turns as he sat on the bed listening to the offer. The whiteness of the spread seemed to glare a rebuke at him, white, alone in the room. His hand went up to his tie and he nervously tightened the knot as was his way when excited. The words went on, the dull, even words, in that insinuating feline voice. Trying to bribe him—him, Dick Gray. He remembered distinctly, like the hundred memories that come to a drowning man, his oration on "Purity in Politics" only the year before at the university. He pushed himself from the bed and staggered against the dresser.

"Me,—you want me," he cried. "Oh, heaven!"

"It's five thousand," the other said, and he softly dropped the key on the white marble of the dresser top.

The click of the key seemed to gather his thoughts together, and he stood looking at them, indignant anger slowly developing into heated words. "So that's your kind of a candidate," he said, trying to catch and check the rapid torrent of his words. "That's a nice kind of a candidate, isn't it? A man that needs to buy votes, it's pretty safe you can count on his selling again if

the price only comes high enough."

He saw the sullen faces of the men in the chairs, their dull animal red fading to the sickish white of defeat. A flash of an idea came to him. "But perhaps it isn't so," he said, quickly, "perhaps Judge Dayrell doesn't know anything about it. I know he doesn't," he went on rapidly, "for he's a gentleman, and he wouldn't employ such crawling scoundrels as you. I'll tell him." He lifted the key from the dresser, and before the politicians could reply, he was gone. He struck the elevator before they did and was down two floors before he heard the yell of the infuriated committee men at the elevator door. Once on the street he called a cab, and in a moment was greeting Betty in the long dark hall.

"You are late," she said, softly; for in the three days they had come very near to each other.

"I had to be," he answered, seriously.

With a touch of the switch she threw a flood of light into the parlor. He sat down on the edge of a sofa. She began talking of the convention, then of the old times when they had known each other. He answered in monosyllables, and after a while she too became quiet.

"They tried to bribe me," he said.

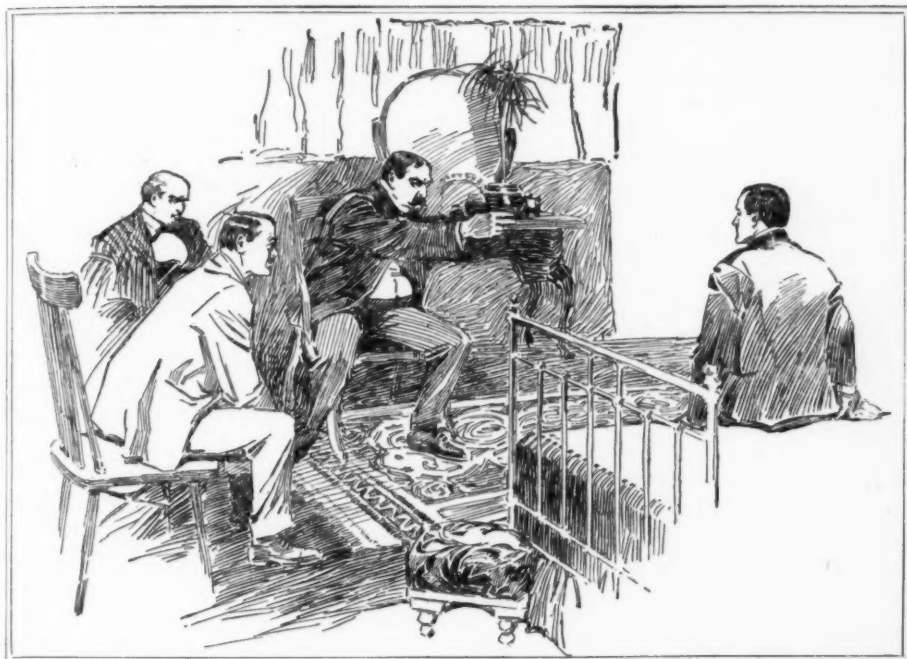
"They, who?" she cried, with a start of alarm.

"Ward, Baker, and Watkins; they wanted me 'to vote right' as they called it."

"Was that for my father?" she asked, in a low voice, so low that it was almost a whisper.

"For your father—yes."

A spot of angry red was in her cheeks. For an instant she threw her hands up to her face and her curls falling forward, completely hid the tears he knew were in the eyes,



"Now we're not in this for fun."

with a curtain of swaying brown. She was so beautiful.

"You refused," she said, more as an assertion than as a question.

"Yes," he answered, but there was no surprise or indignation at her doubting it.

"I would not—for the money," he continued after a little interval. A thought was coming upon him. His oration was fading away. He wondered if bribery included this.

"Would you—for me?" She was looking into the coals of a dying wood-fire, her face away from the blaze of light.

Several minutes passed before he answered. The brown of her hair was a great mist before him. He wanted to stretch out his arms toward it, but something held him back. "Betty, you know," he said, "I——"

A sudden rumble of the sliding

door, and a footstep sinking into the deep carpet broke in upon his hesitating words. The judge stood before him, tall and straight in his old-fashioned dignity, with his white bosom shirt-front running up to a narrow collar and a black ribbon tie. His face was kindly stern, with that dreaminess about the eyes which betokened a man who lived among the creatures of his books, and little with real men. To-night there was more than usual weariness in his face.

"I am very tired," he said, and fell, rather than sat down in a chair.

His daughter went to him and touched his hot forehead with the cool of her hand.

"I am going to withdraw. I have withdrawn," he said, wearily. "I can't understand it at all. I never really cared to be governor, but they told me that everyone wanted me to run, and I thought the people wished



"I always thought I was a gentleman."

it. I guess I was mistaken." He stopped, and Gray thought he heard him sigh. In that moment he was sorry he had not voted for him. "Yes, it seems to be all politics, all politics, and dishonesty everywhere. I'm tired of hearing about it and having people blame it to me. I'm too old to be in it and—I always thought I was a gentleman." He stopped a moment, and Betty kissed him. Then he added, "I've just sent a messenger to Mr. Ward to tell him that I've withdrawn."

Then silence came over the room. Gray moved uneasily in his chair, uncertain how to break the tension of the past moment. Betty came

over to him. "Will you call to-morrow night?" she asked, with something in her eyes that brought a great benediction of joy to him.

The next morning, after a man had risen to announce the withdrawal of Judge Abner Dayrell, and just before the great stampede to Strong ensued, which is now state history, a messenger boy brought an envelope to Ward. He tore it open and found a little key. At ten o'clock of that day, after the nomination, he took the five thousand dollars from the deposit vault. In his telegram to the senator he charged it to incidental expenses, an account about which questions are never asked.

A GIRL, TWO MEN & A RING

An illustration showing a girl in a long dress on the left and two men in hats and suits on the right. The man on the left is taller and thinner, while the man on the right is shorter and stockier. They appear to be in conversation.

By M.J. PHILLIPS.

When the sun, red-eyed, popped his head above the tumbling waves and gazed upon Cocos-Keeling Island, he discovered two young men upon the beach, seated sociably side by side. Although they were bronzed by wind and sun and clad in the simple white cotton garments of the Cocos islanders, a close observer would pronounce them white Americans. One was short, blond and ruddy; the other tall and dark, a humorous twinkle in his eye, and a stubborn set to his jaw. They had just emerged from an early dip in the sea.

A certain embarrassment existed between them. They did not look at each other. The short one hurled pebbles at the waves which slapped at their feet. The other drew characters in the sand with a bit of reed. Overhead, a tropical menagerie had suddenly awakened. Brilliant-feathered parrots quarreled stridently in the trees. A gray-bearded ape peered benevolently down from a lofty palm, but revealed a certain frivolity of character by shying a cocoanut at the figures on the beach, and laughing insanely when they jumped.

The cocoanut unloosed both tongues.

"Nasty brute!" said the shorter one, shaking his fist at the ape. "Think he'll heave another, Jack?"

"No; just wanted to try his pitching-arm, I fancy."

"Say, Jack," queried the shorter one, blinking at the sun, "which one

of us is going home on the 'Norman Castle,' or are we both going?"

John Anthony laughed ruefully. "We can't both go, that's certain. Old Manuelo will rip things if one of us tries to get away, even." He traced his name on the sand, very carefully, then looked up with sudden impulse.

"Say, Billy, let's talk this thing over fair and square. I know where you stand, and you know where I'm at. Another few months here, more or less, isn't what's bothering us. There's plenty to eat, it's a nice climate, and a fellow does enjoy drilling the coons. But we're both thinking of Nellie McCauley, and the fellow who gets there first has all the advantage. That's straight, isn't it?"

William Buckley nodded his blonde head with great vigor. "That's right, old man. But the fellow who goes home could do the square thing. He could tell her how the other was so generous in letting him go, and not rush things too hard until the man who stays behind gets back." It was very evident that Mr. Buckley had pictured himself as the one to go.

"Yes, but the fellow who goes and sits right on old man McCauley's front porch with Nellie has a heap of advantage over the absent hero." Mr. Anthony had also fancied himself as the first wanderer to return, it seemed.

"It's a blamed hard thing to settle. We've got to draw cuts or flip

a coin." He looked up doubtfully to see if Billy approved so profane a method of settling the matter.

Billy heaved a last pebble and straightened himself like a man whose cards are all trumps.

"I'm sorry, Jack, on your account, but I think I'm the one who has the best show with Nellie, anyway." He held up a shapely, albeit tanned left hand.

"See that ring?" He wiggled a thin circlet of gold on the third finger. "She gave me that the day before we left home. It was her mother's betrothal ring. Of course there's no formal engagement between Nellie and me, but——"

Anthony's eyebrows ascended at the mention of the ring. There was just the ghost of a smile about his lips for an instant. Then he turned and addressed his friend heartily: "You're the one, old boy! I have no such claim as that. Just fancied she liked me"—with a smothered little sigh—"but as sweet a little soul as Nellie can't help being good to everyone. Let's go back to the village. I'll beard the old villain for you, but there's sure to be fireworks." Rising, the two strolled toward the collection of straw and bamboo huts a few hundred yards to the westward.

Cocos-Keeling is in a very wide and very wet southern sea. It is a mere pin-point on the map. The island is ten miles long by five wide, and has a population of two thousand, who find the sun so ardent and nature so generous with food and raiment that labor is almost a sin. Cocos is several hundred miles off the track of ships—so far that it is scarcely ever visited twice in the same year—yet near enough to be a haven in case of accident. It is governed by a very black and capri-

cious individual, by name Manuelo. He is a veritable spoiled child with the powers of an emperor.

Anthony and Buckley were guests of the king. "Guests" was a term they never used between themselves; the term reserved for heart-to-heart talks was "prisoners." The young men were respectively captain and first lieutenant of a company of Wisconsin volunteers who had spent two weary years in chasing "Goo-goos" through the rice-paddies of the Philippines, and making sundry bad little brown men into good little brown men.

A touch of fever and a Mauser bullet had kept the officers in hospital after their regiment had sailed for the States. When they finally bade Manila "good-bye," it was on a tramp steamer, aged and decrepit, which gave up the ghost in mid-ocean. Buckley and Anthony got into a small boat together, and drifted in time in sight of Cocos-Keeling. Manuelo's boatmen picked them up when things began to look dark, for food and water both were gone.

They had been nearly two years on the island when the "Norman Castle," from New Zealand to Liverpool, beaten and buffeted by persistent typhoons, rode into the harbor for water and repairs. The wanderers' first few months on the island had been uneventful. The language of the islanders is simple and easily learned. King Manuelo, pleased as a child with a new toy, never tired of their stories of "hikes," and treacherous Filipinos, and guns which shoot four miles. Part in Cocos and part in pantomime, they told him most of their adventures.

Manuelo showed himself a heathen with perception. He had an enemy, a king who ruled another little island

a few leagues away. The enemy, by name Gibara, lorded it over Manuelo because he had nineteen wives, whereas the King of Cocos had but ten, and three antediluvian muskets, while Manuelo had no firearms at all. Vast was the Americans' surprise, one morning, when the Cocos fleet, returning from a long voyage, unloaded two hundred stands of Mauser rifles and ten thousand rounds of ammunition upon the beach.

"I am the man of peace, you are the warriors," explained Manuelo, with his blandest smile. "Behold the guns which will shoot four miles. You will train my men to use them, so that when Gibara comes we may teach Gibara that it is wrong so to act."

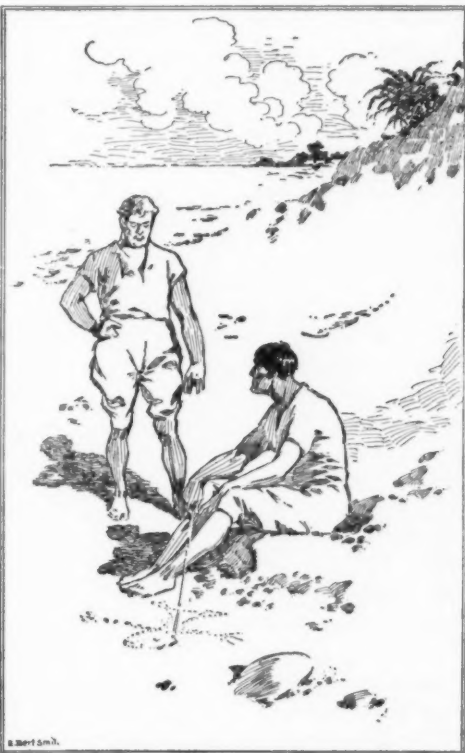
The officers were delighted with such congenial employment. Each selected one hundred stalwart islanders, and taught them everything which could be taught, theoretically, about the game of war. Anthony and Buckley were good drill-masters, and the men of Cocos, except for a tendency to tears when the cruel butt of the Mauser accidentally collided with bare toes, made good soldiers.

The castaways had been on the island eighteen months, and commanders of an army for a year, when

King Gibara came. There were eight boat-loads of his warriors with him, and the three old muskets had the place of honor in the first boat. It was Anthony's plan to capture the hostile chief, but the over-anxious Cocos fighters let drive a scattering volley too soon, whereat Gibara retired with haste and a hole in his fat brown leg. Manuelo was overjoyed

at the discomfiture of his enemy, and declared the Americans should be his guests forever.

A small steamer came in the next week. The soldiers guessed from Manuelo's utterances that they had become almost indispensable to him, and were practically in captivity. They escaped to the vessel at night, and the captain agreed to protect them. He changed his mind next morning, when two hundred dusky natives, each with a cartridge-belt



"Let's talk this thing over, fair and square."

bare and prominent stomach, and two feet of bayonet atop his wicked-looking rifle, marched down upon his ship. There was no Anglo-Saxon grit within the captain's olive skin. He was sorry, but there was only one thing to do: give up the men who had trained these business-like soldiers. He did it.

Things went on as before for half a year. The Americans knew

Manuelo was secretly worried over the consequences of his high-handed procedure. When the "Norman Castle" came in, they decided he might be bluffed into letting one of them go because of it. On the morning after the ship's arrival, the conversation revealing their joint love-story took place, and it was decided that Buckley should be the one to go.

Manuelo's hut, with that of the Americans beside it, stood in the center of the village. The "palace" was distinguished by its size and by a length of rusty stove-pipe which protruded from the side. The pipe and a broken cook-stove had been presented the king by the captain of a French tramp steamer. The outfit was one of Manuelo's dearest possessions, and was quite likely to be going full blast with the temperature at one hundred and twenty in the shade. Just now the pipe was throwing out billows of smoke.

Anthony was quite right when he prophesied fireworks, as Buckley, who took refuge in their own hut, soon discovered. Manuelo evinced his displeasure by roaring like a bull. One of the king's lesser wives came rushing from the hut, weeping bitterly, a long welt showing red on her dusky skin. A feminine voice was raised in anger. There was a second explosion on the king's part, and the old monarch's favorite wife, a dark and haughty beauty, came out. She stopped on the threshold for a Parthian shot. One thing they do well in the tropics—it is to curse. In six comprehensive words, the queen informed her choleric lord that he was a dog; that his ancestors for a thousand years were dogs; and she advised him to worship Nogee—which is the Cocos canines' patron saint. Then she elevated a shapely chin and passed on.

Anthony was the next to appear. There was the battle-light in his eyes as he turned to Buckley: "Keep out of sight a minute, Billy; I'll tame the old devil!" Then he shouted in Cocos: "A Company, fall in! Come on, my Cocoa-Nuts!"

In two minutes, the "Cocoa-Nuts," rifles in hand, many buckling their belts as they ran, had appeared from among the huts and had fallen into line. Eager, expectant, they had eyes for no one but Anthony, and that young man could not keep down a thrill of honest pride. For they were soldiers! Not like the raw-boned Wisconsin lads who had followed him right merrily into fire-spitting Filipino trenches, but there was an air about them which showed his teaching, just the same. Those black fellows would fight for him if necessary against the king.

Manuelo was the first to recognize that fact. "Buckley shall take the ship if he wishes," he snarled. "Why do the men get ready so early? The 'dreel,' as you call him, does not come yet."

"Just a curiosity to see if I could raise 'em," responded the captain, carelessly. "They're here with the goods, all right. Sergeant,"—to a giant who for want of any other place, wore the chevrons of authority on his breech-clout, "dismiss your company!"

The "Norman Castle" and Buckley sailed ten days later. Companies A and B of the Cocos-Keeling National Guard escorted Buckley to the ship. They wore full-dress uniform, white cotton trousers, no shirts, and shell necklaces. Anthony wore his army garb, and the sword to which he had clung, despite the shipwreck, was at his hip. Tears trickled down many a flat black nose, for the men of Company B

swore by gallant, fair-haired little Buckley, and hated to see him leave.

The "Norman Castle" swung out to sea. Buckley waved good-bye from the bridge. "Present arms!" rapped out Anthony, a lump in his throat. He brought his sword in a flashing half-circle to his forehead. "Good-bye, Billy, old chap!" he shouted in English, while Manuelo, who stood near by, scowled suspi-

It wasn't a year later that Captain Anthony, bronzed and hearty, alighted from the night train at Bell Oak, Wisconsin. The night-operator recognized him at once. "Well I'll be darned, Cap!". He shook hands vigorously. "Glad to see you back. Billy Buckley told us when he come that you'd be along."

"Billy here?"

"Sure!"



"The men of Cocos made good soldiers."

ciously. "I'll be home myself on the first American ship that touches here!"

"He worked me fine," mused Anthony, humorously, later, while the glorious moon bathed the village in silver splendor as he sat in front of his lonesome hut. "The nerve of the little cuss, saying Nellie gave him that ring. And I was right with him when he bought it!"

"Married, did you say?"

"Not Billy!"

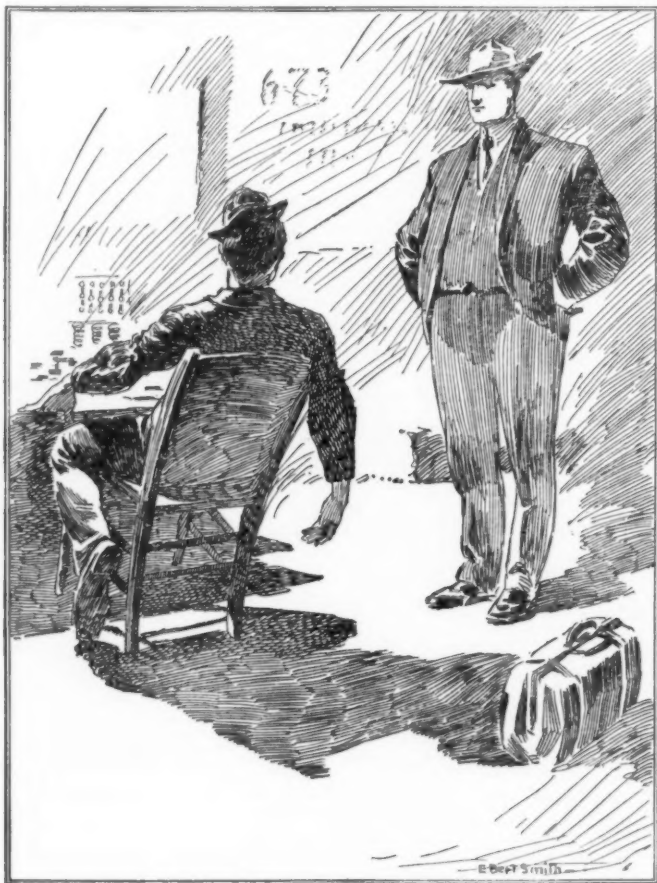
Anthony took a long breath. "Is Nellie McCauley here yet?"

"Nellie McCauley. Let me see," said the operator, reflectively. "Name's familiar. Must be some relation of old Jim McCauley." Then his face brightened. "Why sure! She's married to Frank Hughes, the grocer. They got tied

up just after you fellows went away. Got two kids up there now."

That was a facer, but Captain Anthony took it like an officer and a gentleman. "Married, h'm," he

who sat sociably upon a sandy beach, side by side. The shorter of the two was holding up a tanned, though shapely hand, upon the third finger of which he wiggled a



"Did you ever notice whether Billy wears a ring?"

commented, noncommittally. He looked over toward the lights of the town, but beyond them, ten thousand miles beyond them, to where a red-eyed sun popped above tumbling waves, and gazed at two young men

thin circlet of gold. Anthony's dark eyes twinkled at the picture.

"Say, Joe," he queried, "did you ever notice whether Billy wears a ring?"

SLAVES of the INK

By Edward Boltwood

Enright drew his cuffs from the peg beside his desk and adjusted them precisely. By this traditional process the typewriter knew that Enright was about to venture into the presence of Mr. Ferris. Tradition ruled the publishing house of Clinton and Sons; during half a century the firm had been throttled by it.

The veteran editor of *Clinton's Fortnightly* sat in his private coop, looming portentously against the gray background of the dust-encrusted window. Enright balanced himself on the threshold and bent forward respectfully from his hips.

"I have inventoried the manuscripts in the closet, Mr. Ferris, as you directed," said Enright. "Among them was a small packet of contributions, which, according to the label, hasn't been touched for forty years. Here is a list. I read the articles. Except regarding one poem, I formed the opinion that——"

The editorial chair creaked sharply.

"You formed an opinion, eh?" grunted Mr. Ferris. He drummed with his blue pencil while he ran over the names of the antiquated subjects and unknown authors. Enright realized that a clerk's opinion violated tradition, and held his tongue. The editor scrawled a memorandum on the list and returned it to his assistant.

"All dead wood," he said; "you may destroy them at once."

"Yes, sir. This one poem—it is called 'Ashes'—would you——"

Mr. Ferris glared at him in ponderous surprise. Enright retreated on tip-toe. He restored his cuffs to

the peg with a sigh of relief, and commenced to tear up the sheets of paper in the condemned bundle.

He did the task with great care, for Enright was merely on trial in his present position. At college he had composed a prize epic, and dined once with Dr. Holmes. Ten years after his Commencement Day he was distinguished for the nicety with which he copied letters in the advertising department of the Clintons. A dreamless and more sensible young man would have jumped out of the rut and fled the trade of publishing after such an experience in it. The dream of Enright's life had come true a month ago, when he was promoted, gasping, to the editorial rooms. But he had long since abandoned the composition of epics or of anything else.

Enright's imagination worked gloomily as he destroyed the faded manuscripts that afternoon. With what glorious hope had this essay been penned, with what loving prayers this sonnet! The authors were buried and forgotten, and the end of their ambitions was a clerk's waste basket. When he came to "Ashes" he read and reread it, and laid it aside. The sad despair of the stanzas clung to him, and to his mood the poem made an indescribable appeal.

Promptly at five o'clock Enright pulled down the top of his desk and a bare-armed youth brought some pages of wet proof from the composing-room. One of Enright's mechanical duties was to prepare the dummy of *The Fortnightly* before publication. He liked to do this at his lodgings; it killed a lonely evening for him twice a month. So he

snapped an elastic about the proof and the manuscript of "Ashes," poked them into a pocket of his shabby ulster, and said good evening to the office boy.

Enright resorted to Finn's Loose Change Restaurant for his poached eggs and coffee, for he diffidently cultivated a mild streak of Bohemianism, and there was "character" at the Loose Change. When a stranger of about his own age took the chair across the table, Enright nodded receptively, although the man was in the extremities of seediness. No linen was visible underneath his shiny black coat, his face and hands were pitifully thin, but his voice had a tone which made Enright look at him with attention.

An aggressive waiter slammed down Enright's order on the stained cloth.

"Three eggs and the toast hard," remarked his neighbor, glancing idly at the platter. "Now, at a joint called Mory's, we used to get——"

"Mory's!" repeated Enright. "Were you——"

"Oh, yes." The vagabond drew his breath defiantly. "I was a Yale man. Slavin's my name. What class were you?"

"I'm the other shop," murmured Enright, and introduced himself. "Cambridge was my sprouting ground."

"Well, here we are," said Slavin, with a significant grin, "and I'm going to bankrupt myself for a bowl of stew. Silly fad, this eating habit." He sniffed once or twice suspiciously. "I'll tell you, Enright, I might be having my beef three times a day if it were not for one thing—and unless my nostrils are mistaken, you've got it there in your pocket."

Somewhat bewildered, Enright drew out the package from the pocket

of his overcoat and laid the roll of moist paper on the table.

"That's the baby!" chuckled Slavin, inhaling the sticky, sweet odor of the wet proof. "Once a fellow gets that perfumery in his nose, he isn't worth a continental for anything else, is he? Talk about opium! Where's your job, by the way?"

But before the other could answer, Slavin interrupted him.

"No, don't tell me, Enright. If you do, I'll come around to-morrow and beat you out of a quarter, sure as fate. Honest, that printer's ink does smell good, doesn't it?"

"Are you on a newspaper or magazine?" Enright ventured.

"Lord, no!" exclaimed Slavin. "I was on plenty of them once. Now I'm on the graft, that's where I am," and he attacked the steaming bowl of stew.

Enright sipped his coffee reflectively, conscious of the vague discomfort which a man might endure if confronted by a caricatured reflection of his own career in a dingy and twisted looking-glass. When Slavin had finished his meal he began to talk again. From time to time his hand fell on the parcel of proof, as if caressing it.

"I'll never forget my earliest whiff of that stuff," said Slavin. "I had a couple of stories printed before I left college. The sight of those things in type, and the smell of the proof, made me drunker than you ever saw anybody made by rum. Work—after that? Well, I guess not. Not me. I was an author, I was, loafing around for inspiration."

"Naturally," suggested Enright, "writing is work, and if you loaf——"

"Oh, I know the truisms," broke in Slavin. "Here's my point. The writing microbe lights too often on people who are bound to get poisoned by it. Poisoned—yes, and

sickened, and put out of business, like little old me. Why, do you know what I did once? For the sake of being in a publisher's shop, I nailed up boxes in the shipping room. Just for the scent of that fresh printer's ink," he added, whimsically, "when I might better have been out digging a ditch. And now I'm not honest enough for the shovel, I guess."

quick impulse of disgust, he tossed the bundle of proof into the grate.

"I won't work to-night," said he, "Mike can pull duplicate proofs for me in the morning."

He was half asleep before he remembered that the melancholy manuscript must also have gone up the chimney in smoke. Upon the whole, he was glad to be rid of it.

But on his way to the office, En-



"Enright sipped his coffee reflectively."

Enright went to the glass case by the door and came back with half a dozen cigars, which Slavin accepted thankfully. Thereupon they parted company, and Enright walked for a long time before turning in. He was depressed; the episode of the evening nipped the very roots of his ambition. A coal fire burned in his bedroom and, with a strange and

right found himself repeating the opening lines of "Ashes," and during his luncheon hour he jotted down a couplet on the back of an envelope. Before the week was up he finished a draft of the entire poem, which he kept in his desk and polished furtively.

His draft may or may not have been identical with the first author's.



"Enright's eyes fluttered over the lines."

Enright was certain, however, that the poem was now essentially his. He cherished it and loved it as a part of himself. So irresistible became this feeling as the days went on, that Enright knew at last the wonderful joy of an artist who has thrown his soul into a visible thing. Any lingering scruples drifted out of sight in his intoxication. He experimented with the *motif* of "Ashes," working it out in various forms, and each new casting of the theme seemed to satisfy completely.

His poetic aspiration, stifled for many dreary years, trembled timidly but surely back to life again.

In the meantime he became aware that Mr. Ferris approved of him in his gruff fashion. But Enright did not consider that now. When the "Ashes" verses were ready for the press, Mr. Ferris might go hang. One afternoon the editor of *The Fortnightly*, leaving the office, dropped a manuscript on Enright's desk.

"I have sent Mr. Slavin a check

for this poem," said he. "Let it be scheduled as the leading feature of my Christmas number—four pages in color."

Enright's eyes fluttered over the lines. He filled his pipe and reached mechanically for a match. Under another title the poem was "Ashes," word for word. The fellow had robbed him in the restaurant.

Outside the window at Enright's elbow, a wrathful engine on the elevated shrieked hoarsely. He kindled the match and held it to the corners of Slavin's manuscript. The final flare of the sheets responded to a sudden flush on Enright's face. After all, he thought bitterly, the mere burning of the paper could not avail him. Mr. Ferris had read it; Slavin possessed the original. Fame and publicity for his own compositions were now impossible. He tore them into little pieces and tossed them into the street.

Several days later he had a last interview with his chief concerning the accidental destruction of the Slavin poem.

"To make matters worse," observed Mr. Ferris, "we can't obtain another copy. Mr. Slavin has used our check and vanished."

The older man noted a grim smile

on Enright's lips. "Knows more than he cares to tell," he said to himself, and then aloud, "This disappearance of Slavin carries the marks of dishonesty, perhaps plagiarism on his part. However, that can't excuse your astonishing carelessness. I've had no choice, Enright. You must resume your place in the advertising department tomorrow."

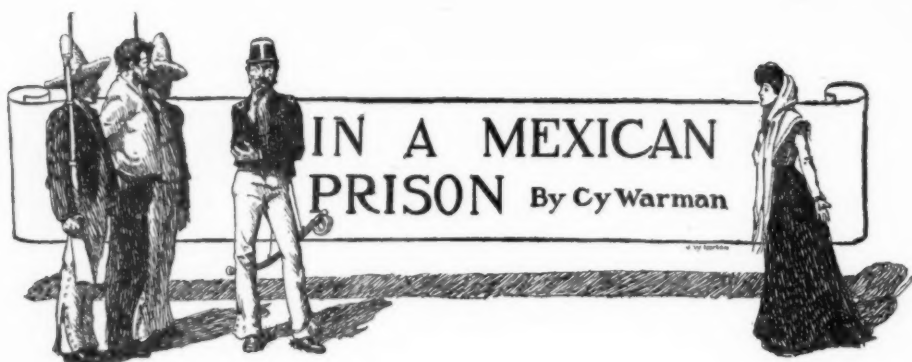
But certain of the editor's phrases stuck curiously in Enright's ear. Had he not been driven himself to dishonest, if secret, plagiarism—and by what?

"Oh, I'm not going back there," said Enright. "I've thought it all over. I'm going to quit altogether. You see, sir, when a man's not fit for it, the smell of printer's ink makes him do things—" he broke off, surprised at his temerity.

"It makes him submit to things," amended the editor, kindly, and with a touch of weariness, "to slavery, sometimes. You'll do well in another pursuit, my boy. I have many friends in business. I might help you greatly, if—if—well, what is the real truth about Slavin's poem?"

"Maybe I'll tell you the story of it," said Enright, "now that I am emancipated."





"Look out ahead there!" the engineer shouted, as the big black locomotive darted round a sharp curve at the foot of a long down-grade. Beyond the curve there was a tangent for the space of two or three telegraph poles, and at the other end of the little stretch of straight track, a long, low, wooden bridge. The road had been rushed in real American fashion, and the steel structure that now spans the wide stream had not yet been placed.

Rounding the curve the driver glanced back to see if the green markers on the rear Pullman were still coming, for it seemed as if the speed of the train would snap the sleeper off, as a boy flings a wet cob from the end of a stick. The engine appeared to hesitate for an instant as it found the tangent, and then to give a wild leap forward. The sun flared up into the cab windows as the river flashed beneath. It was as if the locomotive had sprung from one bank and alighted on the other.

"There's where my trouble began," said the driver, twisting on his narrow seat and turning his head slightly, but not enough to take his eye from the track.

"I was pulling freight at the time," he went on, releasing the lever and giving her another notch as we struck the up-grade beyond the river, "and they were driving us day and night. We used to have to come down the

cañon back there as fast as they'd fall, and fan 'em over the bridge as swift as we could, 'consistent with safety,' as Mr. Robinson would say. If you failed to hit this hill at a thirty gait, it was cut and double, delay freight, interrupt passenger traffic and court disgrace."

The driver moved his left eyebrow slightly, with the faintest glance at the steam gauge, and the fireman, who was leaning over the boiler, dropped down into the coal deck.

"Of course, you understand," the driver explained, "that these Mexicans didn't send for us. The few Yankees, who, for the climate and other reasons, came down here, were taken under protest, but the railroad they would not have at all. As often as there was an accident there was an arrest. Every time a peon perished, a white man went to jail. The influential and more or less intelligent men of Mexico were against the Yankee and his fire-wagon, and the peon followed the fashion of hating the Americans. He would go out and stand on a bridge out of pure cussedness, knowing that the driver would stop rather than run him down, and, at the same time, run the risk of rotting in a Mexican dungeon.

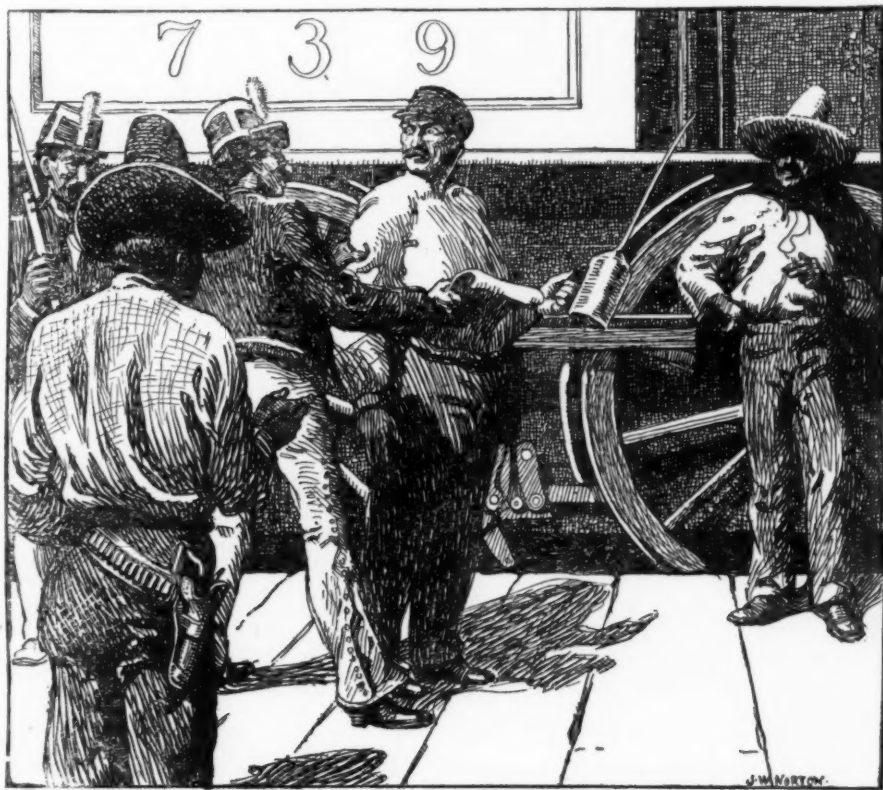
"Well, this day of my downfall, I came round the curve with a big consolidation engine and about a mile of traffic on my trail. As I rubbered round the corner, I saw a pig of a

peon just starting to walk over the bridge. I whistled, shut off, threw on the air and finally reversed the engine. The peon stopped, turned and scowled. Before the air could travel to the rear of the train, the heavy load had kicked the engine across the little level space. I leaned from the window and watched the face of the fool Mexican. When he saw the train was not going to stop, he turned deadly yellow. I pulled the whistle-valve open, the peon crossed himself and sunk, trembling, to his knees, and at that moment the pilot picked him up and scooped him into eternity.

"We doubled that day, and when I got to the end of my run they were waiting for me. They marched me

off, unwashed, to the court, and from the court to the jail. Here I had plenty of time, but no water, to wash, and time to rest and think it over. The railway officials appealed to the United States consul, but the consul was busy, or tired, or attending a banquet or something, so I stayed in jail.

"Months passed, and I began to feel dull, dazed. I could not feel or realize or think clearly. Scores of prisoners, criminals of all classes, came in and sat in silence for a space and passed out again. As near as I could count time, I had been in jail a year, when one fine morning they threw a little Englishman in. As the soldier shoved the man through the doorway, he gave him a vigorous



"When I got to the end of my run, they were waiting for me."

kick, and the Englishman whirled and knocked the soldier out into the yard.

"'Bravo!' said I, and the little Briton turned and came close. He asked how long I'd been in and I told him. I ventured to guess that they would shoot him at sundown. 'Not on your sombrero,' said he. 'I'll be out by that time.'

"To my surprise, the Englishmen showed not the least uneasiness. He had some tobacco and made cigarettes, but I could not smoke. I had been so long on the vile jail victuals that I dared not take the risk.

"Late in the afternoon we heard a great hub-bub outside, the door opened, and in swept a bewildering woman. She glowed and glistened in the shaft of sunlight that followed her, like a butterfly in a muddy lane. 'Ah, Señor,' she cried, giving both her hands to the Briton. A severe-looking man whom I was able to remember as the *Jefe Politico*, the chief or head of the government police, followed the young woman, and a moment later the jailor came in with the soldier who had been knocked down. The soldier was still very angry. The Englishman explained to the girl, and the girl spoke Spanish like lightning for a whole minute. The *Jefe* said something, and then the girl told the prisoner to go outside and show them just how he had been jailed. I saw a devilish grin on the old rascal of a chief's face as the soldier and the Englishman stepped out. The Briton looked as mean as he could, caught the soldier by the collar, shoved him in, and gave him a kick that fairly lifted him off his feet.

"'Bravo!' shouted the girl, the chief smiled, the jailor scowled, and the soldier slunk away.

"After that they began to investigate the Englishman's other offence.

The girl did most of the talking. Her cheeks were flushed with excitement, and her dark eyes flashed fire as she argued and pleaded for her friend, but it was a long time before the chief showed any signs of melting. Finally, however, he agreed to let the man go upon the payment of slight damage done to the property of a Mexican restaurant keeper.

"As soon as his fascinating counsel succeeded in freeing him, the Englishman began to intercede for me. Up to that time I had been sitting on a long bench with the rest of the prisoners, unnoticed, being about the size and shape and color of the others about me.

"After listening for a few minutes the chief threw up his hands and started for the door. He was hungry and thirsty and hot. Already he had been persuaded by the beauty and eloquence of the butterfly-colored interpreter, and was impatient to be off.

"My heart and hopes went down, but the girl turned, gave me her warm soft hands, and said the chief would come back to-morrow.

"'To-morrow,' I gasped, and she withdrew her hands and hurried away.

"She was gone, the dungeon was silent, and still the sound of her musical voice seemed to echo from the dingy walls. She was gone and it was dark, save for the recollection of her sunny smile, that lingering, lit the prison gloom. She was gone and the world grew cold again, but my hands were hot where her fingers had touched them.

"'To-morrow, he will come,' I repeated, and fell asleep.

"The next day dawned as the day before had dawned. There were the same sights and sounds, the same hot, stuffy smell in the atmosphere, the same sad faces about, another

scant meal, and the same soul-crushing silence followed.

"The morning passed, the afternoon waned, and the evening shadows fell about the old jail, but the chief came not. The lift this rift in my clouded life had given me, served only to deepen the gloom in which I seemed to sit. I tried for hours to put the brazen woman out of my mind. I tried to hate her. After all she was not two pesos better than a peon. She had lied to me when I had asked nothing of her. I closed my eyes to shut out the memory of her, and saw her as plain as day. My hands were still warm. I fell asleep hearing the echoes of her melodious laughter and dreamed that I was back in God's country where they have grass and rain and running water.

"The next day began just as the three hundred and sixty-five others had begun, but when I had eaten what I could swallow of my morning meal and sat down to try to think, the door opened quickly and the butterfly blew in. She stood for a moment glancing this way and that. I watched her and hated her. 'Señor Americano!' she called, then catching sight of me she fluttered across the little patch of sunlight that came in through the one narrow window, looking like a dove. 'Señor! ah, Señor!' and I felt the hate going out at the back of my neck. She put out her hands, and as I stood up, touched mine, and then dropped them again. I watched her and could have died for her.

"Rapidly, in bad and broken English, she told me how her friend, who was a mining engineer, had been obliged to go to the hills, and that she had by the merest accident, seen the *Jefe* passing her mother's shop that morning and asked after me. The old sinner had thrown up his

hands and confessed that he had not thought of me since he left the jail. She had gotten him to promise that he would meet her at the jail in an hour, and she had come to talk to me and cheer me until he could arrive. That was the shortest hour of my life. She had brought tobacco and cigarette paper, and she made me a smoke and I smoked it, and enjoyed it as I had never enjoyed a smoke before.

"When she had been there ten or fifteen minutes, the old rogue came in and she upbraided him for being an hour late. I learned then that the chief was the girl's uncle, and immediately his stock went up.

"The girl did the talking, but for nearly an hour the head of the detective bureau sat silent, impassive as the sphinx. Suddenly, as if the thing had just occurred to him, he began to make terms. The girl listened, smiling and frowning alternately. Presently she explained.

"I was to be released, conditionally. The chief was to go over the road with me, on the engine, and if I could satisfy him that peons were in the habit, as I had stated, of walking, standing or sitting on the track for the purpose of annoying the engineers, I was to go free. If there was no evidence to justify my assertion, I was to go quietly and peacefully back to jail, and 'await trial.'

"I consented, of course, was immediately released, got an engine at once, and a few days later the detective and I were sailing down the cañon. We had covered two-thirds of the run, and as often as we came upon a peon he stepped aside and allowed us to pass him without bloodshed. To my consternation and deep disappointment the peons appeared to be getting sense. I had almost lost heart, when we rounded

Diablo curve and found a peon on the bridge.

"I immediately went through the stop performance, but the train failed to stop. It was a physical impossibility to stop between the curve and the bridge.

"Suddenly now, and with startling vividness, the recollection of the awful look of agony that I had seen upon the other peon's face, came to me. I forgot my trial and the man of law who stood behind me in the cab. The shadow of the dungeon that had haunted me all day disappeared. My only anxiety now was to save the peon. I worked the lever, kicked the cylinder cocks open, gave her steam in the back motion, but to no purpose. She literally skated across the short stretch of straight track, and when I looked out again her nose was on the bridge. The peon stopped, turned round, and glared defiantly at the black engine. Seeing we were not going to stop he jumped out onto the edge of the bridge, and grinned insolently up into my face as I passed.

"The train came to a stop with the caboose barely off the bridge, and when the chief walked back he met the peon, and when he had grown

weary of kicking him they rolled him into a way-car, the conductor gave me a go-ahead signal, and I pulled out. We had to cut and double on the hill, and the delay went down against the peon. At the trial that followed, the old chief was the principal witness, and prosecuting attorney.

"They gave the peon seven years in the 'Hot country,'" he added, reaching for the whistle rope, "and I have not seen a Mexican on the bridge from that day to this, and that was ten years ago."

"And what of the mining engineer who found you out, and the raven-haired angel who rescued you?"

"The Englishman made a fortune in the mines, married the girl, took her away with him, and as a compromise between England and Mexico they live in Spain; and if the story had been much longer, we must have cut and doubled, for this is the end of my run."

The hostler climbed into the cab, the yard man pulled the pin, and the big engine rolled away to the round house and to rest. The engineer stood still and watched it until it was lost in the sea of cars that covered the maze of tangled trackage.



The Girl and the Doll

BY ANTONY E. ANDERSON

Standish, chewing savagely at the end of his cigar, stared moodily and unseeingly out through his club window and mentally kicked himself for having been a brute and a cad and a fool.

"'You are a frivolous doll!'" he muttered. Then more slowly, "'You—are—a-frivolous—doll!'"

The words, which were his and had been addressed to the girl he loved, did not have a pleasantly complimentary sound, certainly, and he punished himself by repeating them over and over again, varying the torture by placing the accent on a different word each time—by using new thumb-screws, as it were.

For the life of him Standish could not remember how their pretty little quarrel had begun. Had he accused Cecilia of flirting—or what? But he remembered his own last words very well indeed, and how they had brought her suddenly to her feet, and she had swept from the room with all the dignity of an insulted queen.

The next day there had come to him by the early post a package of letters and a ring, neither of which Standish wanted or had any earthly use for. He had started for the grate with the letters, but at the very last minute some subtle invisible force, some sweet touch of hope, had stayed his hand. Perhaps—

All this had happened only two days ago—an eternity of time to poor Standish.

To-day there was a Sabbath stillness in the air. The usual roar and rumble of Fifth Avenue were hushed. The languorous wind of early May stole through the open window and

touched his throbbing forehead. Standish could hear the sweet, measured chimes from a near-by steeple, and somehow he felt vaguely comforted.

He watched, with a subdued eagerness, the stream of well-dressed, decorous people, mostly women, drifting slowly by on their way to morning service.

Cecilia Wharton had always been a good churchwoman, and he had sometimes gone with her to church, past this very window. How devout, how pure, how unapproachable she had always seemed, kneeling in the little Gothic church while he had sat, stiff and vaguely uncomfortable, on the bench behind her!

"'She drew an angel down,'" he had murmured, stealing swift glances at the nape of her slender, bended neck, where he knew the loosened tendrils of shining brown hair lay. He had often longed to touch them, softly, but he had not dared.

The look of exaltation in her eyes, when they left the church together, had subdued and humbled him, and he had wondered what he had ever done to deserve the love of such a girl.

Standish groaned and flung away his burnt-out cigar. "'You are a frivolous doll!'" he muttered again. "Oh, you unmitigated fool!"

"Who—me?" some one said at his elbow, and he turned to find Cecilia's twin brother looking down at him with calm, quizzical eyes.

"No—me. Teddy, if you love me, leave me. I want to be alone."

"To indulge your megrims till you're jaundiced to a lemon? Not much, I won't! Because that I love you, not wisely but too well, I'll stay awhile."

"Oh, well—stay then," Standish growled, sulkily. "But for heaven's sake take this cigar and shut up!"

"Thanks. And a match, please, old man? Thanks." Puff, puff. "Good cigar. What's the brand?" Puff, puff. "I say, Standish, what's the row between you and Cissy? She's been as mum as an oyster for two long and weary days, and though I'm no Sherlock Holmes I can see through a brick wall when there's a brick out. What?"

"I didn't speak," Standish replied, grimly and quietly. "If you'll kindly mind——"

"Another match, please, Billy. This blamed cigar won't draw. Thank you."

"Teddy," Standish began, "will you or won't you go home?"

"Will you—won't you?" Teddy repeated, cheerfully. "Sounds like a game, but I guess I don't care to play it. Billy"—puff, puff,—"*Oh*, hang this cigar! Billy, you're an ass!"

"If the cigar——" Standish's voice was suspiciously even and polite.

"*Oh*, the cigar's all right. I'm not finding fault with that. It's you. Now, if you'll give me your undivided attention for just two minutes and a half you'll hear of something to your advantage."

"Well?" Standish breathed. "Go on, can't you?"

"Cissy won't pass this window today, Billy. She isn't going to church."

Standish, flushing hotly, evaded Teddy's sharp glance. "Who said she would pass?" he demanded.

"Nobody; but I said she wouldn't. For why? Because she isn't in town."

"The deuce!" Standish rose suddenly to his feet and grabbed young Wharton by the shoulder. "Where is she, Teddy?"

"In some jay town in Jersey. Said she had a pressing invitation to visit an old school chum, Kate somebody -or-other, and that she couldn't and wouldn't wait a day. So she went."

"Teddy," Standish faltered, "what would I better do?"

"Follow," said Teddy, concisely.

"Then—what?"

Teddy grinned. "Great Scott, man! If you don't know what to do I can't enlighten you. I'm no sighing Romeo."

But Standish had brightened perceptibly. Teddy's insinuation was lost on him. Nor would he have cared, if he had noticed it.

"Tell me the names of the jay town and the school chum," said he.

"Mercy—no. Mercer—is the town, and—let me think—the girl's name is Jenkins, or Hawkins, or Wilkins, I don't remember which. But I'll telephone to the house, if you like. The mater will know."

"No—don't do that. Your mother would be sure to find out you were here and had seen me, and—er——"

"Exactly. I see. Well, try all the Hawkineses and the Jenkinases and the Wilkinases, and you'll be sure to find her. And now, one good deed done to-day, I'll toddle home and think up some more."

"Teddy," said Standish, earnestly, "you're a brick. Have another cigar."

"I will, since you're so pressing." Teddy gazed reflectively into space. "Funny," said he, "how a man's estimate changes with his point of view. Now, five minutes ago I was not a brick, but a——"

"Drop that, Teddy! Remember how I felt five minutes ago."

"I don't remember, but I guess. Well, ta-ta. Be good to yourself—and to Cissy."

"I will," said Standish, fervently.

Dusk found him in Hoboken, and midnight in Mercer. He questioned the sleepy hotel clerk at once, and found that Mercer had no Hawkins or Wilkins or Jenkins within its borders.

"Confound Teddy Wharton!" said Standish, under his breath.

Then he went to bed.

However, he found out the next morning that there was a Colonel Pitkin in Mercer, and that he had a daughter named Kate.

He mooned about the dingy hotel and the quiet streets all day, without the courage to put his fate to the test.

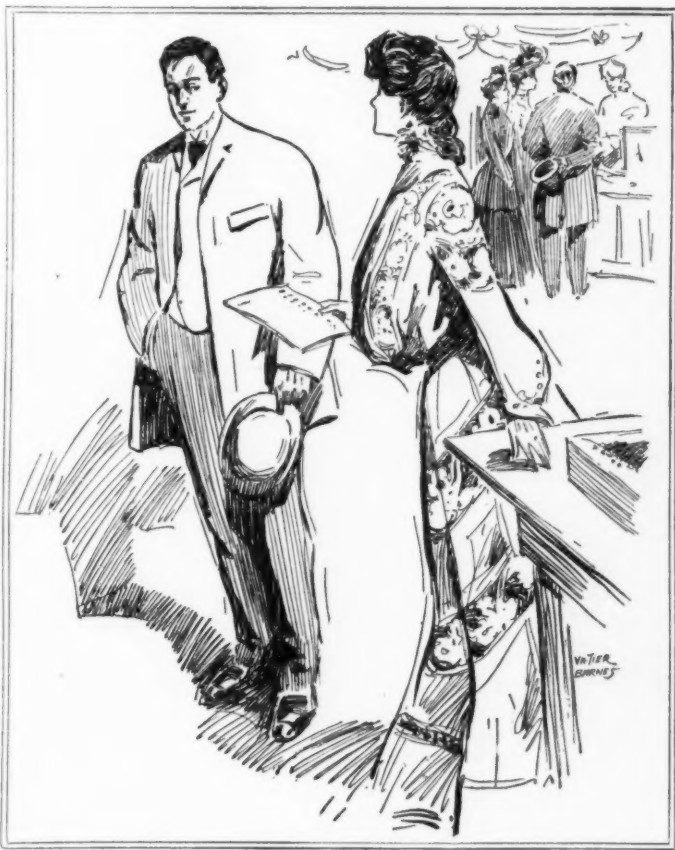
"I was a fool to come," he said to himself. "Seems to me I'm always a fool! If she ever had any respect or—or love for me it's gone long ago."

At half past eight he passed disconsolately the First Congregational Church of Mercer, whose "parlors" were ahum and alight with a bazaar in full blast.

Standish wavered at the door. Then he slipped in. He did not know what else to do with himself. He had passed the Pitkin mansion four times that day, and after awhile he meant to make it a fifth.

He plastered himself against a wall, looking so glum that some time passed before any of the pretty girls with blank books and pencils in their hands ventured to approach him. But at last some one tapped him gently on the elbow.

"Won't you take a number, please? On a Paris doll, you know. It's on



"Won't you take a number, please?"

exhibition at that long counter over there, and it's just too sweet for anything!"

The girl was very young and very pretty. She had appealing brown eyes, so much like Cecilia Wharton's that Standish plunged his hand in his pocket and pulled out two silver dollars.

"How many numbers for these?" said he.

"Eight. Oh, thank you! Sign your name where you find vacant spaces. You took so many I do hope you will win it."

Standish smiled, whimsically and somewhat sadly.

"Unlucky in love, lucky in play," he thought. "So no doubt I'll win this 'frivolous doll' soon enough. But I want the other one—I must have her! Frivolous? Why, she's the most earnest little Puritan that ever breathed—God bless her!"

Before fifteen minutes more had passed, the little maid's success, triumphantly whispered abroad, had emboldened many others, and Standish's name was on their books for a sack of flour, two brass candlesticks, a five-pound package of coffee, a bicycle, and a "complete set of Bacon, bound in calf."

Standish felt himself so irrevocably "bound in calf" in truth, toward the last, that he made his escape and started for the Pitkin mansion, which he passed three times more. Then he went to his hotel and to bed.

And while he slept he won the Paris doll!

"Kate," said Anna Pitkin the next morning at the Pitkin breakfast table, "see if you can decipher this name. I can't." She handed a red blank book over the table to her sister. "Number forty-four. It's taken the prize."

"Name?" said Kate, glancing at the book. "Why, it's a ditto mark, Anna."

"Oh, you stupid! Look up the page and find number forty-one. He took eight numbers on our Paris doll, all in a row."

"Who did?"

"Why, that man—whatever he is.

Can you make it out? I give it up."

"Um—no-o-o. Pretty poor writing, I must say."

"Well, he didn't look poor, then. He was stunningly dressed and quite handsome. All the girls at the bazaar were just wild to know who he was, but none of us could read his name on our books."

"Let me try," said Cecilia Wharton. "I'm quite good at hieroglyphics. I used to—er—Anna, let me try."

Cecilia took the book. "What number did you say? Forty-one?"

Her face paled suddenly. Then a crimson flush surged to her cheeks. She closed the book with a little snap.

Kate and Anna were gazing at her curiously. What was the trouble?

"It's—it's—" Cecilia began, half laughing, half crying in her excitement, "it's—Kate, guess who it is."

"Cissy! Not—?"

"Yes!"

"Well, whoever it is," said Anna, "he's won our Paris doll."

Kate stared. Then she burst into a gale of uncontrollable laughter. "Oh, ha, ha, ha!" she shrieked. "Oh, ha, ha, ha! Cissy dear, I beg your pardon, but I—oh, ha, ha!—I really can't help it. It's too excruciatingly funny! Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

But Cecilia was not offended. She was smiling herself. There was a tender light of happiness in her eyes, and a suffused glow on her cheeks.

"Didn't I tell you, Cissy," Kate went on, "that he never meant a word of what he said? I almost knew he'd come. But I didn't suppose his contrition was so deep that he'd gamble for another—frivolous doll. Ha, ha ha!"

Anna looked mystified and half angry. "If you two will kindly explain—" she began, with much dignity.



"See if you can decipher this name."

"Oh, we can't, dear," Kate said, hastily. "At least, not just yet. But if you've a Paris doll for Mr. Standish you'll probably find him at the Butler House."

"And, Anna dear," Cecilia put in, blushing adorably, "before you send the box to him I'd like to drop in a note for my—for Mr. Standish."

"Oh, certainly," said Anna, stiffly; "by all means."

This is what Cecilia wrote:

"Billy Dear: By coming to Mercer you have won 'a frivolous doll,' and you are to call her, as always, your

"Cissy."

Two minutes after reading this note Standish, his head awl with stupefaction and delight, was on his hurried way to Colonel Pitkin's house.



FOR CYNTHIA'S SAKE

BY ISABEL GORDON CURTIS

Across a chasm, where brick heaps, torn beams and shattered furniture were licked by greedy tongues of flame, the militia and firemen gazed with desperate helplessness. Six lines of hose were tossing a torrent of water on the blazing ruins and steam, which arose in dense clouds and shut out like a gauze curtain, the building, rent in two by a terrible explosion.

The shock had awakened a sleeping city at daybreak, and a stream of disheveled people poured in from every street. The police shut them outside a cordon of rope, and tried to hush the roar of human voices, for across their clamor the fire chief could not make his orders heard. Once he raised his voice lustily, not to his men, but to the howling throng outside the ropes.

"Men and women, don't you know that human lives are at stake? If you cannot help, do not hinder us."

The morning was still, but a sudden gust of wind blew the steam clouds aside and there stood revealed the side of the four story hotel, cut cleanly in two.

"It looks like a doll's house thrown open," said a shuddering woman. Her teeth chattered while she spoke.

"Stop the hose," shouted the chief.

As the steam cleared away, the spectators took in the sickening details. Fragments of human bodies lay scattered inside the torn walls; the flames were transforming them into shapeless, charred masses. Here and there the roof had gone,

and the fourth story had the dull morning sky for a ceiling.

In one bedroom, a woman lay with her head at the verge of the shattered floor. She was still with the stillness of death. The adjoining chamber held a white crib; a little girl clad in a thin night dress sat on the edge of it. Occasionally she brushed aside the yellow curls, which fell about her face. Half of a window beside the bed was gone, and a muslin curtain fluttered over the riven wall. The child reached to the foot of the bed and lifted a pink-faced doll, with hair as yellow as her own. She wrapped her arms about it and tucked her bare feet beneath her.

"Mama," she cried, in a frightened voice. "Mama, where are you? Mama, I want you."

A great sob went up from the silenced street.

A man in torn overalls, with the hair singed from his head and eyebrows, reached over the rope and clutched the arm of a tall fireman.

"That's Cynthia," he cried, "little Cynthia Balfour. Her mother's the woman in the next room—lyin' dead. Isn't there any way to reach her? She's the dearest little kid."

"There's no way," answered the fireman, gloomily. "The hotel's afire on the other side, and nobody can go through that." He pointed at the mass of burning debris.

The child sat rocking her doll and crying softly,

"Mama, come, please, please, mama come."

From the portion of the building

left standing, clouds of black smoke and white steam rose to the sky in thick columns. The flames crept into the shattered rooms on the torn side, winding like fiery serpents about the handsome dining-room on the first floor. There was a roar,

the surging mass of human beings. The terror of the scene had awed her into silence. She ceased to call for her mother.

"Damn these bars," cried a hoarse voice, which rang high above the tumult of the conflagration. The



"Isn't there any way to reach her?"

and a burst of strange, blue light shining through the gray of the morning. The spectators realized that the wine-cellar had been swept by flames. It made the faces in the crowd look weird and ghastly. The little girl sat staring down upon

mob suddenly turned its gaze from the flame-doomed child to a stone building across the street; it was the county jail.

"There's a prisoner trying to escape," cried a woman in a terrified voice.

The door of the jail swung open. The sheriff and four of his men followed hotly at the heels of a tall, gaunt, half-clothed prisoner, who carried a coil of rope under his arms. He hurled himself unceremoniously through the mob, and dashed in at the door of a lofty warehouse, which faced the riven hotel. A few minutes later he was standing on the roof silhouetted against the sky, into which the red of dawn was creeping.

He led the way to a corner of the building, followed by the sheriff and his men. He leaned out over the low stone railing, measuring with a trained eye the distance between the roofless white bedroom and an alleyway six stories below.

"I can do it," he shouted, desperately. "Come, put the ropes about me."

The sheriff knelt on the gravelled roof to knot ropes about each of the prisoner's knees. The other men tied them around his lean body.

"Now, hold, for the love of heaven, hold tight, when I lean over. It is two lives you are saving. Some of you lash yourselves to that thing." He pointed to a bronzed cupola, from which fluttered a blue flag. "You can steady the others, hold to them when I throw. It will take all your muscle."

"We are ready," cried the sheriff. He was winding the ropes about his hands like a pair of reins.

The prisoner drew a great breath, then he leaned half his long body over the railing.

His voice changed, a strange note of tenderness sounded new depths in it.

"Cynthia," he called, "Cynthia, darling."

The multitude heard the thrill of that voice above the sharp crackle of the fire, which was creeping now about the second story of the hotel.

Men and women turned as with one movement, to watch the child.

"Father," she screamed, "dear, dear, father, come and get me."

"I am coming, darling," he answered. "Coming in a moment. Cynthia, listen to me, dear. Put down your doll and listen."

The child laid her doll upon the bed and gazed across the fire-swept abyss into her father's eyes.

"Do you, remember, sweetheart, out on the plains, last summer, when you rode your little pony, how father used to lasso you?"

The child nodded eagerly.

"Father is going to lasso his little girl now, sweetheart. Come just three steps nearer, there, that's enough. Now stand still, perfectly still. Father will get you in a minute."

While the man spoke, he wound a long coil of rope about his arm, thin, snake-like rope with a noose



"The child sat rocking her doll."

at the end of it. His face grew set like a mask, his eyes were fixed steadily on the spot where the child stood, and the muscles in his sinewy arms rose like whip cords.

He glanced at the men behind him as if a sudden thought had struck him. "One of you get a coat or

ing throng, it seemed as if the man would never move. The moments passed like hours. He spoke only once again, in a clear, steady voice.

"Now, Cynthia, remember, stand still. If I don't get you this time, I'll throw again. Trust to me, dearest."



"The rope flew across the ruins."

something ready—soaking wet. It may be needed." The command died away into a shuddering sob. "God help me!" he whispered. Then he turned to gaze steadfastly down into the smiling face of his little daughter.

To the upturned eyes of the wait-

"I do, father," cried the shrill, childish voice. The flames were creeping now about the third story floor.

There was one tense swing of the long, spare body, then the man leaned forward, away out forward, over the sea of whitened faces below,

and the rope flew, like a living, breathing thing across the ruins, straight into the little, white chamber. It wreathed as if with an embrace about the tiny form in the thin night-dress and wound itself around the tender arms. In another second the child seemed borne as if on wings over the heads of the breathless crowd. She gave one sharp cry of agony as the rope crushed her soft flesh. She swung far out, into the alleyway, so near the wall that clasping hands thrust from an open window might have drawn her in to safety. She swung back again, away back, almost to where a red banner of flame seemed reaching out to clutch her and a groan of despair went up from a thousand throats.

The motion of the rope pendulum, with the small limp body weighting it, changed. It was being lifted by steady, long jerks, higher and higher, till just outside the stone cornice it stopped. Strong hands reached over to clasp themselves about the child, then she lay motionless, cradled against the throbbing heart of her father.

"Is she safe?" went up in one hoarse shout from the street.

The sheriff's gray head appeared over the railing.

"She is safe," he cried. "She is only in a faint."

The mob turned again to watch the doomed hotel. The muslin curtain in the fourth story bedroom changed to a small quivering flag of flame. The blaze leaped to the white crib, in another second nothing stood there but a red-hot iron skeleton.

On the roof of the warehouse, Owen Balfour knelt with the child in his arms. A fluttering breath shook her slender body, she opened her eyes slowly.

"You did come for me, didn't you, father?" she whispered.

"I did, sweetheart."

"And you will never go away again and leave me all alone with mama? Will you?"

"Never, my little girl."

He rocked her in his arms, shedding the gentlest kisses on her white cheeks and soft mouth.

"And will we go back to the ranche, father, to stay there always?"

"We will, precious."

There was a note of desperate resolve in the man's voice, but he smiled into the child's eyes.

"We ought to take her away to be cared for," said the jail physician who had joined the group. "There has been a great shock to her nervous system, and she is badly bruised. May we put her in our own hospital, sheriff?"

"Of course, of course. And, Balfour, you want to go with your little girl yourself, don't you?"

The man nodded. He rose to his feet with the light burden clasped to his breast. The child tried to put an arm about her father's neck, but she stopped with a shriek of pain. The tears stood in her brown eyes.

"The good doctor will soon make my little Cynthia well," said the tender voice of her father; "the cruel rope hurt, didn't it?" With the doctor by his side he strode to the elevator. Two of the blue-clad jailers followed automatically at his heels.

"Guard off!" cried the sheriff, sharply. "I'll be answerable myself for the safety of the prisoner." The man looked back over his shoulder with grateful eyes.

An hour later the prisoner stood before the sheriff in his office.

"Sit down, Balfour," said the old

man, cordially. "How is Cynthia?"

"Sleeping soundly, sir. The doctor says in a week she will be well."

"What do you propose doing then? Do you know your wife is dead?"

The man bowed his head between his hands.

"I don't believe you are the sort I'm paid to watch over," the sheriff said kindly; "you're not used to jail air."

Balfour flung back his head with a haughty gesture.

"I'm not," he cried, "I never saw the inside of a jail till I came to wait my trial. I was born and bred out on the plains. She came from the East." He pointed a trembling hand at the blackened ruins across the street. "For a few months after we were married she seemed happy enough, then she began to fret for the East and for city life. I did everything I could to make her happy; nothing pleased her. She hated the ranche and ranche life. Six months ago I had to take a business trip to St. Louis. I wanted to take her with me. She would not go. I came back a week after. She was gone. Cynthia and she had disappeared."

The man dashed his hand across his eyes. "Sheriff, I could have stood it if she had left Cynthia; she is all I have in the world. I came East to look for them. I chased here and there, half crazy. A man

was with her, Habberton; he came to visit us two years ago. If I had known the law, I could have taken Cynthia, without doing—what I did. On the plains we shoot a man down like vermin, if he acts like vermin. He stood beside when I asked for Cynthia, he mocked at me and laughed in my face. I gave him—what we give such men on the plains. I have not seen my child from the day I went to St. Louis till I took her in my arms to-day."

The sheriff walked across the room and laid his hand on the man's shoulder. "Balfour," he said, huskily, "I think you'll go back to the plains soon. Yesterday they telephoned from the hospital that Habberton is mending fast. My opinion is, he scarcely deserves to mend; I'm glad of it though for your sake. He was notorious in this town. You had sympathy from the beginning—lots of it. To-day the papers and the people will demand your release. There have been a hundred men and women here already begging for it. Ten minutes ago the mayor took a train for Albany to ask your pardon from the governor. You will go back West, I reckon, and——"

Balfour's gaunt frame shook with sobs. Then he sprang to his feet and caught the sheriff's hand in a powerful grasp. "Thank God!" he cried. "Thank God, for Cynthia's sake!"





By a singular coincidence, Betty fluttered into my office just as I was addressing a letter to her at the lakes. To imagine that my surprise was not joyful was not to know Betty, yet I found it in my heart to wish that she had waited to receive that letter. It is always easier for me to write things than to blurt them out in conversation, and I could no longer let her remain in ignorance of my week-old engagement to Eleanor.

There was really no reason why it should have been difficult to explain this to Betty, for we had been such capital friends at the lakes, but my engagement had been something of a surprise to myself, so naturally it would strike Betty as unexpected—to judge from her manner, one might say extremely unexpected.

"Yes, we just came in this morning," she said, in response to my rather incoherent greeting. "And I lost both my purse and my aunt at the depot, so I came for you to take me home—if you aren't too busy, Mr. Doctor."

This was purely a superfluous irony on Betty's part. I ignored it, but it lent severity to the decision of my tone. "I always lunch at one," said I, "and it's one o'clock now."

"I'm hungry too," said Betty, and together we strolled into the grill room at the Auditorium.

"Yes, I know," she said, comprehensively, when I was in the middle of a sentence. "But what is the matter, really? You look fearfully woe-begone!"

"I'm not at all woe-begone," I returned, with spirit. "I was merely thinking of some one—something else. I want you to meet Eleanor."

I realized that this was a lame and inadequate introduction of the subject, but to tell the truth, she looked so distractingly pretty, glancing up under the brim of a cocky little hat pierced with a black feather, that the last thing a man would naturally want to tell her would be his engagement to another girl.

"Eleanor?" repeated Betty.

"Eleanor Dusant," I said. "She—I—that is—we—" Betty's laugh stung me and I went on in a rush, "We, Eleanor and I, are engaged to be married. I was just writing you about it when you came in. I want you to meet Eleanor, Betty. I know you'll like her."

"What makes you think so?" said Betty, with entire composure.

I floundered.

"Why we, you and I, Betty, have been such friends, such very good friends."

"Weren't we!" agreed Betty. She put down her oyster fork, and slanted her eyes quizzically under her tilted

brim. "Isn't this just a little—er—sudden?" she queried.

It had been sudden. I said so. Somehow the admission seemed disloyal to Eleanor, so I added that I had always had an inner consciousness from my childhood that Eleanor and I were destined for each other.

"Ah!" said Betty, with her eyes on the plate. "Was this—this consciousness very strong this summer?"

I grinned. The agile waiter, darting about me, saved me the necessity of replying until I could command my expression.

"It was ever present," said I then, with dignity. "Several times I was on the point of confiding in you, but something or other always prevented."

"Yes, I know," returned Betty, unblushingly. "I thought you were going to tell me something else, you know!"

There really wasn't any obvious reply. Her lack of interest was apparent, and her placid acceptance of the situation piqued me to say the least, yet I hardly knew what I did want from her. I only said irritably, "You might be decently enthusiastic. You aren't at all cordial."

"What do you expect?" cried Betty. "What shall I say? Will you teach me? Come, let's exchange rôles—you sympathize with me!" and Betty laid a slim brown

hand upon the table and smiled down at the solitaire upon the third finger.

"Why Betty!" I exclaimed.

"Why Betty!" she mimicked.

"You don't mean to tell me—isn't this a bit—sudden?"

"I wore it all summer," said she.

"Not on that finger!" said I.

"Well, no, not all the time."



"We had been such capital friends at the lakes."

There was a brazen twinkle in her eye that I refused to meet. The extent of her iniquity was dawning on me.

"You have been engaged all summer!" I cried.

"I didn't let it hurt the summer," pleaded Betty.

"You have been wilfully misleading me," I declared. "You have been practicing on my—my cre-

dulity! You were engaged to this man that night on the water when you confessed to me that you had never felt the touch of love!"

"You—you won't tell him, will you?" begged Betty with every sign of alarm.

"You were engaged to him that evening at Lawdon," I swept on, accusingly. That evening had differed from other evenings in but one respect. But what, I ask you is a man to do, when a girl, a pretty girl, flits past you in the moonlight mocking you with her eyes? I had followed, and my steps had been swifter than Betty's.

Betty had the grace to grow pink under my gaze, but her lips only scoffed. "You had the—the inner consciousness, you know."

I was silent; she pressed her advantage. "Well what are you going to do about it?" she laughed.

"Nothing at all," I said. "But I must say I am surprised at you! Oh, it isn't for myself I am grieving—I feel for him—deeply! When I think how you have deceived him, cajoled him, tricked him—well, I should like to be the man you are engaged to, Betty!" I added, in a fine burst of indignation.

Betty flashed me a swift glance and there was a subtle sparkle in their depth that set me marveling. Her cheeks were flushed and her lips were puckered a little ruefully and wholly disarmingly. Slowly, still marveling, I repeated my words, "I should like to be the man you are engaged to, Betty!"

But Betty's gaze turned to something behind me and there was almost alarm in her face. She leaned forward and whispered hurriedly, "Is Eleanor dark—dark and tall? And does she wear a blue suit and a blue hat with three black pompoms and a hat pin of the Canadian seal? Be-

cause there's been a girl like that at the table just back of you—she's going out now—and she's been so terribly interested that it just flashed over me——"

I whirled about and caught a brief glimpse of departing skirts at the doorway. But the glimpse was enough.

"Oh, do you think she heard?" cried Betty.

"Every word!" said I, with conviction.

"Is she very—very implacable?"

"Absolutely so." Somehow I fairly gloried in Eleanor's strength of mind.

"Oh, what are you going to do?" she quavered.

"What are you going to do?" I demanded. "It's every bit your fault you know. You invaded my peace, you interrupted the course of love's young dream, you blasted my life's happiness, and in fifteen minutes," I consulted my watch, "in fifteen minutes you will be causing Mrs. Dusant a very bad quarter of an hour."

I had not meant to say anything about Mrs. Dusant's part in the affair, but she has a way of coming in without knocking. Betty laughed, and the dimples which had fled at her discovery, rearranged themselves demurely in the corners of her mouth.

"If you were to apologize—sufficiently," she suggested, "I am sure—they—would take you back."

I shook my head. "They will never forgive me," I said, firmly. I had made up my mind about that.

"Oh; you can explain," she urged. "Sacrifice me! Don't mind my feelings in the least. Just tell them the truth."

"I rather think they have guessed it," said I, darkly. Betty looked innocent—pointedly, insistently in-

nocent. Her eyebrows rose in guileless question and her eyes met mine in a blank baby stare. She was so evidently slipping out from all share in the blame that I flung her my first question in haste.

"What are you going to do?"

"What can I do?" she asked, with plaintive sweetness, and her eyes rested, for just the fraction of a second, on the ring on her hand. It was a huge, garish thing. I eyed it with a sudden abatement of my joyous mood and when I spoke again constraint had crept into my voice. "Who is he?" said I. "Betty, tell me, who is he?"

But Betty did not answer. She hung her head like the guiltiest culprit in the jam closet, and turned from pink to scarlet under my gaze. "Betty," said I, gently, and then, "Betty!" I cried, in sudden inspiration, "there isn't any man!"



"You haven't been engaged all summer!" I cried.

"Just a dream man," said a small, meek little voice—not at all Betty's voice. "It was my graduation ring. Only—only I don't see what that's got to do with it."

But I thought I did.



The Shelling of Hiram Deed

BY BAILEY MILLARD

Hiram Deed sat in the doorway of his cabin after a hard day's work in a prospect hole, and watched the moon tip its horn over a pine-clad butte in the west. He was smoking his clay pipe and stroking the cat that lay snugly in his lap. Deed was a man of a thoughtful breadth of brow, with a face as brown as a ham and the kind of black eyes that look you through; he was stumpy of stature, with powerful arms and legs, and could load up an ore-bucket as quickly as any miner in Tuolumne County. He seemed quiet enough now as he sat there in the doorway, but he had a nervous, impetuous way about him which at times was very offensive to his partner, big Bob Doane, the limpest personality to be found in the diggings—a man of glutinously indefinite mind, with the ambition of a beetle and the insight of an angleworm.

"I wonder," said Hiram, speaking of Doane, who was absent in Hangtown, "how long it will take him to celebrate his birthday and get sobered up. Seems to me his birthdays come about three times a year."

The alert, clear-headed Hiram had a way of prodding up his slow-going partner until that worthy man could stand his righteous digs no longer, and would slink off to town and seek out some bibulous and convivial spirit to assist him in getting rid of his "dust." Sometimes he would remain away a whole week and sometimes longer. He had been gone three days on this latest visit, and the ostensible reason of it was, as usual, his birthday. As this frequently-occurring anniversary generally required a most demonstrative and prolonged observation, there

was no telling when or in what condition he would return to camp.

Sitting there in his cabin door, blowing the cool tobacco smoke into the quiet evening air, Hiram heard the crisp snapping of pine needles a little way down the gulch, and bent his ear attentively, thinking he heard the footsteps of the delinquent Doane. But the figure that shambled around the corner of the cabin was not Doane's. It was that of a wiry little man, with a smoothly-shaven face that showed a thin, penetrating nose and a chin hardly worth including in the inventory. The man had restless little rat eyes that gleamed strangely in the moonlight. He came up to the cabin door and Hiram gave him a hospitable "Good evening!"

To this friendly greeting there was no response. The man was passing the curious Hiram and entering the cabin without a word, when the miner interposed a mildly toned protest.

"Hold on, old man," he said. "What are you up to?"

There was no reply to this demand. The man proceeded to a table in the middle of the room, on which stood a lighted lamp. There was food on the table, and this the visitor eyed hungrily.

"If you want something to eat," remarked Hiram, rather testily, for he hated mysteries, "why in Sam Hill don't you say so?"

The strange little man sat down in a rawhide-seated chair and took off his hat, revealing a crop of short, black, uncombed hair, banged low over his eyebrows and down to his shifty little peeping eyes that shot strange glances at Hiram and at the

cold bacon and beans on the table.

The visitor made a dive into the pocket of his rusty blue overalls, drew forth a short piece of pencil, and looked around inquiringly.

"Oh, deaf and dumb, are you?" remarked Hiram, handing him a piece of brown wrapping paper. "That explains it."

In an irregular hand the man wrote on the paper: "I am very hungry. Please give me some food."

"Help yourself," scribbled Hiram. "Eat all you want."

He cut some bread and put on the teakettle. The visitor ate plate after plate of beans and bacon, finishing off with bread and jam, and two or three cups of tea into which Hiram poured what was left of the sticky fluid in his last can of condensed milk.

"Do you want a job?" scrawled Hiram, when his well-filled guest sat blowing great clouds from a pipe which the miner had packed for him with plug-cut. "I can give you work for a few days—till my partner comes back. What is your name?"

There was no enthusiasm visible in the man's manner as he slowly set down the words, "All right. My name is Paul Jones. But I know little about mining."

"Oh, I can show you," scratched Hiram. Then it occurred to him that he knew the finger alphabet of the deaf and dumb, as a cousin of his who had lived in his father's house when he was a boy had been a deaf mute. So he fingered out some signs to the man, who shook his head and wrote in reply:

"I can't understand. Your signs are different to mine."

"You are not an American then?" scribbled Hiram.

"Oh, yes," was the unhesitating reply.

"Your name is a good one. Paul

Jones was a great figure in our history."

The man shot a shifty glance toward the floor and then penciled:

"Yes; it was my father's name."

Hiram did not like the look of the fellow, and he slept with one hand on his six-shooter and one eye on the hearth, under a certain flat stone of which was buried his strong iron box containing the result of his year's work on the quartz ledge. But Paul Jones snored innocently enough, and ate breakfast the next morning like a man on whose conscience rested nothing heavier than a moth's wing. Yet he handled the drill awkwardly when Hiram set him to work in the shaft, and it was slow stopping to scrawl off instructions for the novice to—

"Pull it up and turn it a little after each stroke or it will stick.

"Keep the hole wet.

"Don't let the sacking slip up, or all the water will squirt out when the hammer strikes.

"Don't hold it too tight.

"Keep turning, turning, turning."

After he had written the last word a dozen times, and the drill still stuck in the hole, the impatient Hiram would make twisting motions with his hand and glare fiercely at Paul Jones and yell out: "There, you doddering dummy, it's stuck again!"

Not a little satisfaction inhered in the miner's ability to relieve himself by such an outburst. In spite of what Bob Doane might hold to the contrary, Hiram was not a man who liked to injure anyone's sensibilities, and this being able to curse a man who was none the wiser for it, carried with it its own peculiar gratification.

But the more Paul Jones worked at drill-handling the less competent he showed himself for that particular

kind of labor. So Hiram tried him at the hammer. The man picked up the tool with surprising deftness and struck the drill-head with a certainty of stroke that mightily pleased Hiram, who held the drill.

"That's good," he signaled. "Keep it up!"

But within an hour Paul Jones became weary of the work and struck so wildly that Hiram was in momentary fear of the fall of the ugly hammer upon his hand.

"Stop trimming the steel!" yelled the miner, signing with his fingers. "Strike in the middle!"

Yet Paul Jones' strokes were wilder than ever. Hiram grew very wary, and when at last the hammer-wielder missed the drill-head and struck his hand near the wrist, the blow fell but lightly, as the hand dodged quickly away.

Paul Jones looked a world of relentfulness and compassion, but to Hiram, who was as pleasant as a nervously impatient man can be who has just felt the stroke of a four-pound hammer on his hand, the sympathetic demonstrations were not in the least convincing.

"You're the darndest dolt in seven counties!" bawled the miner, flirting his hand about swiftly and then covering the injured flesh with his mouth. "What are you good for, anyway, you lazy lunkhead? A whole row of such miners as you wouldn't be worth a burnt match."

Paul Jones continued his mute expressions of sorrowful sympathy and signed that he was willing to proceed with the hammering.

"I'll be more careful," he wrote on his paper.

"Yes, you will!" roared Hiram. "You ain't got sense enough to last you over night. You couldn't tell a two-hundred foot shaft from a mill chimney." He sucked his injured

hand for a minute and then grasped the drill.

"Hit her easy!" he bawled, making signs.

Paul Jones jerked his head several times to signify his understanding of the order, but the hammer came down on the drill with terrific force and a mighty clang.

"Well, there's no use telling you anything," said Hiram. "Go ahead; but if you make another misslick I'll kick the stuffing out of you!"

Subtly alert for the next false movement of the whizzing hammer, Hiram kept his eye on Paul Jones' "swing" and when the next blow fell on his hand—in the precise spot where the other one had descended—the injury was not more severe than the first one. But Hiram grasped the hammer from the clumsy hands, and the toe of his heavy boot struck Paul Jones very suddenly and forcibly upon his left shin, making him dance about the bottom of the shaft on his right foot, grimacing like a monkey with the megrims.

After Hiram had finished a set of curses so elaborately ornate and original that he paused for a moment to admire them as an extempore composition, he said:

"Well, I'll try the clumsy galoot at getting out lagging, and if he can't do that, I'll let him go—that's what I'll do. If Bob was here I'd let him go now. Wonder how long his celebration is going to last."

The "lagging" was merely short pine poles with which the interior of the shaft was cribbed up to keep it from caving in. Paul Jones was sure he could cut the poles and bring them down to the shaft without doing any damage to the axe or to the earth's crust in that vicinity. So Hiram went at the drilling alone, Paul Jones letting him down in the bucket and grinning at him from the

mouth of the shaft, thirty feet above.

Hiram had arranged a system of signals which were to let his assistant know what he wanted while he was down in the mine. This device was an ingenious affair—a set of stout strings that raised little rags of different colors on a pole at the mouth of the shaft. If the miner wanted the bucket pulled up or let down, he would raise a red rag; if he wanted water he would raise a blue rag, and if he wanted dynamite he was to run up a white rag. This signal code worked very well for a day or two, but when one morning Hiram wished to be pulled up that he might sharpen his drill, he jerked the string two or three times and there was no response. As the bucket was down, he climbed up the rope, with indignation flashing from his big black eyes. Going over to the place where Paul Jones had been cutting poles he found the axe sticking in a stump. He looked about among the pines for his able assistant, but in vain. Going toward the cabin, he saw him scuttling out, his little eyes wearing a startled look.

"Why ain't you at work?" growled Hiram, pointing to the axe and gesticulating like a harlequin. "All you've cut to-day is that little pile of poles. What do I hire you for? Well, it's useless to waste words on a saphead dummy like you."

Paul Jones made a motion toward his mouth with his dark, skinny hand.

"Getting something to eat, were you? Blest if you ain't hungry all the time. You do beat all. And you ate twice as much breakfast as I did."

Hiram went into the cabin and glanced at the bread and beans. "Why, he didn't touch any of the grub. Wonder if he's been disturbing anything else. He bent over the

hearth. He fancied that he saw a few grains of fresh earth at the side of stone that hid his treasure, but the gold in the iron box which he hastily unlocked was safe, and he dismissed the suspicion by saying that the "lunkhead hadn't sense enough to get away with anything like that." He sharpened his drill and went back to work.

Just before dinner he was ready to prepare his blasts, and so he pulled up the white dynamite rag. As soon as he had done so a vague misgiving seized him. This was the first time that this signal had been given, and he wondered if the awkward Paul Jones would not maim himself for life by the explosion of one of the terrible fulminating caps that were used to discharge the dynamite and could be depended upon to blow off a man's arm if exploded in his hands. Or he might blow himself to pieces by the accidental dropping of a stick of dynamite. But when the face of Paul Jones appeared as a dark cloud in the little patch of blue sky above Hiram's head, the man appeared cool enough. He hauled up the empty bucket, the windlass whining and the ratchet racketing unmusically.

"There's no use yelling up to him to be careful," thought Hiram, "and if I give him any more of those rag signals it will only rattle him."

He waited with a little anxiety, looking upward very intently. At last the dark hand and arm of Paul Jones appeared above the edge of the shaft, holding out a long candle of the Gray Terror by which rocks are riven and earth is upheaved. When the face of the man above came into view, Hiram was horrified to see that it wore an unusual sinister look, while the little rat eyes gleamed down at him with a malign fierceness

that was frightful to behold; and, what was most astonishing of all, the thin lips parted wide and an uncannily exultant voice croaked and laughed down the shaft:

"Now, 'Iram, it's my turn! You're in a tight plyce down there, old man, beggar me heyes if ye ain't! You'd better say your prayers. W'en I lets this 'ere drop you'll be blown to the New Jeroosalem!"

The dumb had found a voice—an awful voice that could speak the death warrant of Hiram Deed! It was a brave man that stood at the bottom of that shaft, looking up at the hand that held grim death in its light grasp, but brave as he was, his face whitened, and a tremor shook his stout frame. He said nothing while Paul Jones' hand held the dynamite over his head in sullen, ghastly suspense.

"I'd 'ate to be in your plyce, 'Iram! You'll get pyed now for treatin' me that wye—cussin' me and bootin' me, you bloomin' beast! I was sorry I didn't knock off your bloody 'and that time I 'it it with the 'ammer, but, blast me heyes if I don't get more than heaven with ye now! And I know's w're your gold is 'id and I'm agoin' to 'ave it and be sylin' back to Austrylia in the next steamer, w'ile you are lyin' down there in bloomin' bloody little bits, a-wishin' you was me. Say your prayers! One—two—three!"

The Gray Terror dropped from his thin fingers and fell straight as a plumb bob into the shaft. Hiram gave a convulsive groan and as the dynamite fell, his eye marked its downward flight and his hands sprang aloft to meet and clutch it. He had been the catcher for the baseball team at school, and had won local fame for the deftness with which he gathered flying balls from behind the plate. So that now, although he

was undeniably nervous, he grasped the descending stick of dynamite before it reached the rocky floor of the shaft, and laid it carefully upon a piece of burlap on which he had been sitting while handling the drill.

"My word!" he heard Paul Jones croak from above. "It didn't go hoff. We'll see if this 'ere one is any better."

He dropped another candle of the high explosive, which Hiram caught as carefully as before.

"There were just six sticks in the box," said Hiram, "I've caught two. Can I catch the other four?"

The sweat stood upon his ash-white brow while he rigidly clutched in his earth-stained hands the next downward-hurling cylinder of sudden death. He fumbled the next one, and thought he had "muffed" it, but snatched it from under his knee within two inches of the rock. Two more remained. There was a lull in the descent of the deadly missiles, and Paul Jones peered down and saw by Hiram's dim light the upstretched hands of the fear-frenzied miner.

"Oh, that's the 'ow of it, eh? 'E catches 'em and lays 'em aw'y. But 'e can't catch two at a time—not 'e! Gawd 'elp your soul, 'Iram! 'Ere they come!"

He dropped the last two sticks of the Gray Terror and sprang back and stood straining his ears in expectancy. But the roar that should have announced the rending of Hiram into the small pieces in which he had fancied the hardy miner, did not resound through the gulch. Hiram had caught one of the gray sticks and the other—it certainly was his lucky day—had fallen into a pail of water that he kept to moisten the drill hole, so that the shock of concussion had been too slight to explode it. Hiram, exulting over the

fact that the last of the death-dealing dynamite had been thrown down the shaft, placed all the sticks together, rolled them up in the sack, and stowed them away in an open space in the lagging. He heard Paul Jones cursing the "bloomin' powder that wouldn't go hoff," and then the dark head was obtruded again in the little patch of blue and the rat eyes gleamed as wickedly as ever.

"Well, it's more work, but there's plenty o' good 'ard stones up 'ere, 'Iram, and 'ere's one of 'em, with my compliments!"

A boulder as large as a man's head thudded down beside Hiram, nearly striking one of his feet. Quickly the crafty miner fell to the bottom of the shaft, with a loud and well-simulated death-groan.

"Well, that's the hend o' 'im," he heard the murderous Paul Jones say as he started away from the shaft.

Hiram Deed lay where he had fallen in the bottom of the mine for a long while. He wondered how he would ever get out again, as the rope was all wound upon the windlass, and it would be useless to try to climb up the slippery lagging. If Bob Doane would come! But of course he was not at the end of his birthday celebration yet. He would stay and stay——

The reaction from the sickening death terror came at last, and Hiram Deed lay limp as a wet towel in the bottom of the shaft. His thoughts melted dizzily into each other. He had a vague sense of a flying forth to meet the Angel of Death that had been spreading his wings over the shaft. Then he sank back into the limbo of lost souls and there was darkness everywhere.

"Hiram, Hiram, oh, Hiram! Are yeh down there, Hi? Hiram, Hi-

ram, can't yeh answer? Hiram, Hiram, oh, Hi!"

Bob Doane's bull voice was roaring down the shaft, and it finally woke the unconscious man who lay at the bottom of it. He started up, all abroad for a moment, and then yelled back in mute terror:

"Don't throw any more, for God's sake, don't throw 'em! I can't catch 'em! I'm all played out!"

"Don't worry, Hi. It's me—Bob Doane! I'm goin' to let down the bucket now, an' you git in, if you can, an' I'll draw yeh up."

Hiram obeyed with difficulty, and the piney air of the upper world smelled good in his nostrils. He was reeling, so that Bob Doane, who was now as sober as a deacon, had to support him to the cabin. When he reached the doorway Hiram was surprised to see Paul Jones lying on the floor, done up like a bundle of apple trees in a most complex system of knots. Pale and flabby as he was after his terrible ordeal, Hiram Deed managed a sickly smile as he look toward Doane inquiringly.

"Oh, I ketched him all right," said Doane, with a stout emphasis on his unfortunate verb. "He had got the iron box over by the rock near the tool-house, and was bangin' away at the lock with a hammer an' cold chisel when I came up the gulch. So I jest gathered him in, this way," illustrated the big miner, giving a great bear hug to an imaginary captive, "an' there he is, safe as my watch, which the same is in soak down there with the Hangtown barkeep. But, oh, Lord, how he was cussin' an' growlin'! I had to plug up his potato trap with that old sock. He was a-bawlin' out a lot o' cockney stuff. Say, do you know what I think? He's the chap I was readin' about in the paper to-day. Hold on; I guess I got one in my

coat pocket. He fished out the week-old Hangtown *Prospector* and read the notice of a reward offered by the Sheriff of Tuolumne County for "the capture of Phil Sheridan, alias Winfield Scott, an Englishman who came to this coast from Melbourne, a short man with a large nose, long black hair and beard and small black eyes; speaks a mixture of Australian and cockney dialect."

"Goes into Amurican history for his names—see," said Bob Doane. "And he's cut his hair and shaved his beard; but how could he fool anybody into thinking he was an Amurican?"

"By playing dummy," said Hiram.

Then he told his story of the intrepid Paul Jones and his treatment at his valorous hands.

"Well, he shelled yeh with giant,

did he—the varmint," said the disgusted Doane, giving Paul Jones' prostrate form a most irreverent kick. "Say, Hi, I feel as cheap as red clay about this. If I'd a ben here it wouldn't a-happened. An' I swear now I won't taste another drop o' liquor till my next birthday!" He pressed Hiram's hand with his great paw and assumed a most self-reproachful air.

"Oh, you assay high in good intentions!" said Hiram, "but while you're about it I wish you'd just promise that you won't have another birthday till next year. You were born altogether too often to suit me."

"I promise," said Doane, as meek as a sheep. "An' now let's git this deef an' dumb man o' yourn into the hands o' the sheriff."

The Elopement of John Henry

BY G. W. OGDEN

John Henry Haddix, constable of Polk township, sat on the railing of Mill Creek bridge with the burnished badge of his office pinned to his left suspender. John Henry chewed a sprig of hazel with studious severity, shifting his position uneasily from time to time, to crane his neck and bring his eyes to bear on the stretch of road screened by the clump of sumac bushes at his right. As he leaned forward the sun played on the star fastened above his suspender buckle and magnified its importance and its glory mightily. The shade of the maple tree had moved away from him as the sun mounted the ladder of the still Sabbath forenoon, and above the white dust of the rock

road the air trembled and wavered like oil.

John Henry tugged at a strap with a hame ring at the end, pendant from the band of his trousers, and drew out his watch. Then he looked up at the sign over the roadway at the end of the bridge, and read it for the twentieth time within the hour:

WARNING!

\$5.00 FINE FOR RIDING OR DRIVING OVER THIS BRIDGE FASTER THAN A WALK, OR FOR DRIVING MORE THAN TWENTY HEAD OF HORSES OR CATTLE ACROSS AT ONE TIME.

It was hot. John Henry worked his finger around the uncomfortable neckband of his collarless white shirt

in an effort to ease the unaccustomed pressure about his throat. Drops of sweat trickled down his face and plashed on the garment's gleaming, stiff bosom. It drank them as a thirsty alkaline plain blots up the summer shower. John Henry took his coat from the railing beside him where he had carelessly placed it upon his arrival, folded it with the lining of farmer's satin outward, and deposited it on a little bed of hickory branches by the roadside at his feet. Then he climbed to the railing again, faced the south, and composed himself to wait.

"They'll pass this a-way goin' to Five Point, shore," he muttered. "If that feller does it agin, by crackey I'll yank 'im up, hide an' taller."

John Henry was not perching on the bridge railing as the shadow of justice as exemplified by the statutes of the state, but rather as an individual sheltering himself behind the body of the law for the purpose of gratifying a personal revenge. He expected Lum Wilson, of Greenwood, to pass that way between eleven and twelve o'clock, driving a chestnut mare to a yellow-wheeled, rubber-tired buggy. The evidence of past observation justified his further expectation that Belle Zeeny Tweddell would be on the narrow seat beside him.

That was the point. Without Belle Zeeny on that narrow seat, a seat scarcely wide enough for one, according to John Henry's country-bred specifications, Lum Wilson could have driven across the Mill Creek bridge at his mare's liveliest trot, as he had, to the constable's personal knowledge, done a hundred times before.

Lum Wilson, like a serpent in his glittering skin, had driven out of Greenwood nearly three months

back, and "cut" the constable out of Belle Zeeny's company. For two years before Lum's gorgeous advent, John Henry had regularly solicited Belle Zeeny's hand each Saturday night. For two years Belle Zeeny had regularly sighed each Saturday night, and answered: "Well, John Henry, I like you well enough to marry you, but as I've told you so often before, marryin' as a general run is so common that there ain't nō more excitement about it than a funeral. Of course we could git married an' settle down on your hundred an' twenty, but that's what all the girls in Five Point do. I want something different, something dashing and exciting about it."

John Henry could never make it out. His understanding of dashing things was inseparably and solely connected with the homely domestic task of churning. John Henry had never read the continued stories in *The Welcome Visitor*. As he sat on the bridge railing, with the July sun drawing little pustules of pitch from the knots in the structure's three-inch flooring, he conceived the idea that Belle Zeeny wanted a dashing man. A dashing man. Yes, he had heard that expression. It echoed back in the hallways of his memory, in Belle Zeeny's voice. A dashing man! No doubt she considered Lum Wilson dashing. Wherein was Lum Wilson more dashing than he, John Henry Haddix, constable of Polk township? Was it the yellow-wheeled buggy, or was it the clothes? Not the clothes, certainly not the clothes.

John Henry glanced with pride well satisfied at the shining farmer's satin lining of his coat. Maybe Lum Wilson wore collars, stand-up, sharp-cornered, stiff, stuffy, choking. The thought of all the attendant discomforts carried John Henry's hand

to his throat again. Collars were not the only thing to set off a white shirt. John Henry removed the button from the front of his neckband, and drew from his pocket a larger and more elaborate one. It came apart in the middle like a piano stool, and the stem was inserted through the bottom hole. Then, with a firm pressure, the head, corresponding to the seat of the stool, was snapped on, a strong spring which clicked like the snap of a halter strap, holding it in place. The button displayed a front composed of some stone resembling Castile soap. John Henry fingered it with satisfaction and glanced down approvingly at his star. If personal adornment made a fellow dashing, thought John Henry, he wasn't far from it.

But his heart hardened toward Belle Zeeny. If a dashing man could win her, could he not win some one else? And then the recollection of an incident at the annual picnic of the Anti-Horse Thief League two days back was bitter. John Henry was there with his star. Lum Wilson passed with Belle Zeeny clinging to his arm like a fragment of white cloud.

"Oh, git on to the star," sneered Lum, loud enough for the constable to hear. Belle Zeeny had looked at him.

"Constable Haddix," said Lum. "He wouldn't arrest a rabbit." Belle Zeeny had clasped her hands around Lum's arm, bent forward and laughed. Laughed at him, John Henry Haddix, constable of Polk township, and with that three dollar-and-a-half solid-rolled, filled, eighteen carat gold ring he gave her last Christmas on her deceitful finger all the time. Wouldn't arrest a rabbit, hey! So John Henry sat in the sun and waited. He knew that even

Preacher Tolbert wouldn't hold out past noon.

The dust ground by passing vehicle wheels from the soft stones that formed the roadbed, muffled the sound of Lum Wilson's horse's feet. John Henry did not hear them coming until the horse stepped upon the farther end of the bridge. The animal was advancing at a rapid trot. John Henry jumped to the middle of the roadway and shouted, "Halt!" Lum Wilson pulled back on the lines, his face white with the fear of coming trouble, and brought the animal to a stand.

"Oh, it's you, is it, John Henry?" said Lum. "What d'y want?"

John Henry, ignoring this overture of peace, advanced with dignity. With his left thumb under his suspender, lifting the star as far from his body as the elasticity of the material to which it was fastened would permit, and placing his right on the horse's bridle, John Henry said:

"I arrest you in the name of the Yew Nited States." Then, as an after thought, he added, "So help me God."

Lum Wilson's hands trembled as he shifted the lines. "W'y, what have I done?" he asked.

"You've broke the law," John Henry answered. "Git down out of that there buggy." Lum obeyed. John Henry took the place beside Belle Zeeny, gathered up the lines and said: "Now, Mr. Wilson, you walk along ahead of the mare, till you come to Squire Trimble's. When you git there you open the gate for us to drive in. If you a-tempt to dodge me, I'll put a bullet clean, slap-dab through you."

It was a mile to Squire Trimble's and the dust in the road was at least two inches deep. Lum Wilson wore low shoes and scarlet hose. But he

walked in the middle of the road, with John Henry, Belle Zeeny, the mare and the yellow-wheeled buggy following. Belle Zeeny moved as far away from John Henry as the limited space they jointly occupied would permit, sniffling and wiping her eyes.

Squire Trimble convened court in the parlor. Constable Haddix, his hand on the prisoner's shoulder, appeared as prosecutor.

"What is the charge agin these prisoners?" asked the squire.

"They ain't only one prisoner, Your Honor," explained the constable, "an' his name is Lum Wilson, of Greenwood. He's charged with drivin' over Mill Creek bridge faster than a walk, agin the peace of mind of this here state."

"Well," said the Court, "as this is Sunday I kain't try you. The law says—I got it right here if you don't b'lieve me—that I can either release you on your personal re-cog-niz-ance or compel you to furnish a cash bond, accordin' to my jedgment. Now, as I don't know you personally, only by hearsay, you see I kain't except of no personal re-cog-niz-ance. So I'll require you to put down a cash bond of three dollars in cash money for your appearance here for trial to-morrow morning at seven o'clock."

The prosecuting attorney had tried a case before Squire Trimble a few days prior to that date, and fragments of court procedure as laid down by that eminent legal light still remained with the constable. He cleared his throat.

"If the Court please," he said, "I object to that bond. It ain't big enough."

"Your objection is ruled off," answered the Court. "Mr. Wilson, plank down three dollars." Mr. Wilson complied. "Now," said the

Court, "you air to be here a Monday morning at seven o'clock for trial, an' if you ain't, you don't git this money back. That you for-fit an' it goes to Constable Haddix an' me for our trouble."

"I ask for a speeny for Miss Belle Zeeny Tweddell," said John Henry. The squire wrote the summons and delivered it to the constable. John Henry turned to Lum Wilson.

"You can go now, Mr. Wilson," said he; "We ain't got no further use for you to-day." Lum left the room. "Now, Miss Belle Zeeny," said the constable in his official capacity, "I'll walk home with you. Speenys ain't no good 'less they're served on people when they're at home."

When they reached the road in front of Squire Trimble's house, Lum Wilson's rig was hidden in a cloud of dust half a mile away. John Henry leaned against the gate post and laughed. "He won't never come back," said he, "he's a-scared half to death!"

Belle Zeeny looked at him with a pretty questioning lift to her eyebrows, then a smile played over her face like sunlight upon the water.

"John Henry Haddix," said she, "you're sharper than I thought you was."

Lum Wilson forfeited his bond, and John Henry Haddix was well satisfied, especially when Belle Zeeny told him in confidence that she was disappointed in Lum.

"He's too cowardly for me," she said, looking up expressively into John Henry's face. "But I don't blame him much, for you was fierce, John Henry, when you said, 'I'll put a bullet through you.'"

"That was all a bluff," John Henry answered. "I didn't have no gun." John Henry tried hard to persuade

Belle Zeeny to consent to have him go for a license. But Belle Zeeny had romantic notions still, although she had not hinted at a dashing man since Lum Wilson dashed out of her range of vision in a cloud of dust. She read *The Welcome Visitor* each month, and while waiting for the next number went through the accumulation of four years. The outcome of this special line of study was that Belle Zeeny finally reached a definite decision as to the sort of marriage she wanted. It must be an elopement. Nothing short of that would do. There would be excitement about an elopement, and it would be a bold departure from the conventional home weddings of Five Point. John Henry couldn't see the sense in it. Nobody in authority objected to the marriage.

"Oh, elopements are so romantic," said Belle Zeeny, "especially when they pursue you."

When John Henry went home that night, he carried with him several copies of *The Welcome Visitor*. At their next meeting he said, "That a-lopement business suits me all right, Belle Zeeny. Wha' d' you say we 'lope off about next Wednesday night?"

At two o'clock Thursday morning, the alarm clock that generally aroused John Henry at four, called him from his bed. He dressed carefully, including in his toilet the collar button to which he attributed in a large degree his final success with his adored. John Henry slept on the second floor of the low farm house, directly over the kitchen. His window was but nine feet from the ground, and to save the walk downstairs, he had leaped from it scores of times. But on this morning he fumbled under his bed and drew out a halter strap which he fastened to the forepost of his bed

and flung the free end out of the open window. Then, after pinning a note to his pillow, he slipped down the strap to the ground. John Henry knew the front door of the house stood open; he knew he could have walked out unheard in his bare feet, but that would not have been in keeping with the story in *The Welcome Visitor*. He had promised Belle Zeeny to follow it as nearly as possible. He stood for a moment beneath his window regarding the dangling strap.

"I wonder what dad'll say when he sees that," he chuckled, as he turned toward the barn.

Belle Zeeny was awake. When John Henry placed her father's fruit ladder beneath her window and started to climb up to give the agreed signal, she appeared, all garbed in white, and presently stood beside him, giggling nervously. John Henry's buggy was at the gate and they were soon speeding away toward the county seat along the white road. At the section line the road forked, one branch leading to the county seat, the other into the hills and wooded country south of Mill Creek. When they reached that point, John Henry suddenly checked his horse, turned half way round, and leaned forward.

"Listen," he whispered, clutching Belle Zeeny's arm. "They're after us!"

Belle Zeeny started. "Who?" she asked.

"Your father an' brothers," John Henry answered. "We must light out or there may be bloodshed."

He snatched the whip from the socket at his side, and lashed the horse. It leaped forward and took the road leading to the south, toward the hills and away from the county seat. It was a dirt road, cut into deep ruts and hummocks, and Belle



"John Henry Haddix, constable of Polk township."

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Zeeny clung to John Henry's arm to keep from being bounced out of the jolting vehicle.

"They're a-gainin' on us," said he. "Don't you hear 'em a-hollerin'?" Belle Zeeny heard the roosters in the surrounding farmyards announcing the coming of dawn. Unreasoning fear changed the cheerful calls into wild and vengeful shouts. She began to cry.

"Why air they follelin' us?" she sobbed.

"Don't ask me," John Henry answered. "All I know is they air."

Beyond the bridge John Henry stopped the horse and listened again. "They've took the road to Olathe," he said. "Don't you hear 'em a-gallopin' over the rock road?"

Belle Zeeny heard only the galloping of her own heart and the panting of John Henry's horse. But imagination attuned the sounds into diminuendo hoof beats on the hard macadam road half a mile away.

"They'll go on to Olathe," said John Henry, "an' then they'll come back. We got to git out of this an' find some safe place where we can

hide. We'll go down the old loggin' road to Walnut Creek an' stick to the timber there till they give up the game."

Belle Zeeny broke out afresh. "Oh, I wish we hadn't 'a done it," she cried. "I wish I was back

and as they journeyed dawn glowed dimly and brightened into day. Birds fluttered tamely to the wayside bushes and regarded them quizzically with heads perked to one side. On the bank of Walnut Creek John Henry drove to the center of a



"I wonder what dad'll say."

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home. Take me back, John Henry, take me back!"

"Take you back an' maybe have to shoot your pa," said he. "Not much, Belle Zeeny. I ain't a-goin' to stain my han's with humant blood if I can git out of it."

They drove slowly along the unused and weed-grown logging road,

grassy spot wherein an elm drooped its languid arms.

"We'll jist wait here, Belle Zeeny," said he. "If they come, you git behind the tree an' leave me to fight it out."

John Henry unhitched the horse and held it by the reins while it cropped the long grass. Belle Zeeny,



“Everybody laughed, everybody but Belle Zeeny.”

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huddled in a fearful heap on the buggy cushions at the foot of the tree, started at every brushwood sound and strained her eyes down the dim roadway for a sight of the horsemen she feared would appear. The shadow of the elm tree told her that it was past noon when John Henry hitched the horse to the buggy again. He tied the animal to a sapling, and sat down beside her. He lifted her moist, trembling hand, and stroked it soothingly.

"Belle Zeeny," he said, "I got a plan. I don't feel that it's best to tell you what it is, but I want to ask you if you'll trust me to git us out of this with whole skins?"

"I'll do whatever you say, John Henry," she answered, meekly.

They were soon driving toward home, John Henry whistling softly. When they reached Mill Creek bridge, he drew a handkerchief from his pocket. "I want to blindfold you with this han'kercher, Belle Zeeny," he said. "It's a part of my scheme. I may have to spill the blood of some of your relations before this here a-lopement's over with, an' I don't want you to be a witness agin me. Let me tie this over your eyes, that a-way, that's good. Now pull down your veil."

Belle Zeeny knew when they reached the rock road, for John Henry whipped the horse up to a terrific speed. She knew from the beat of its hoofs that it was going at a gallop. But which way? Curiosity raised a hand to the bandage over her eyes. John Henry caught her wrists and held them in his big grasp.

"Don't you dare to try to look,"

he warned. "Remember your bargain."

In a few minutes the horse stopped his reckless gallop and Belle Zeeny felt the buggy turning away from the main road. She fancied she heard a gate swing complainingly on its hinges behind them and struggled to wrench her hands free.

"You jist keep still, Belle Zeeny," cautioned John Henry.

"Where air you a-takin' me to?" she demanded, excitedly. "Let me see. John Henry Haddix, if you don't let me see, I'll scream!"

John Henry's horse stopped and John Henry jerked the bandage from Belle Zeeny's eyes.

"You can scream if you want to, Belle Zeeny," he said.

Belle Zeeny saw the apple tree that grew behind the kitchen window of her own home, and under the tree she saw her father and mother, her four brothers, John Henry's parents, Preacher Tolbert, and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins. Belle Zeeny was confused. She turned to John Henry, but he was looking out over the cornfield. Everybody laughed, everybody but Belle Zeeny. Her father came forward.

"I don't understand it," Belle Zeeny stammered. "Wasn't you after us?"

"After you nothin'," her father replied. "What 'd I be after you for, child? John Henry he told us a-week ago that you an' him was a goin' to a-lope last night. Now come on in an' git married, Brother Tolbert's a-waitin', an' I know he's a-gittin' impatient to begin on that infare dinner your ma she's got spread out"

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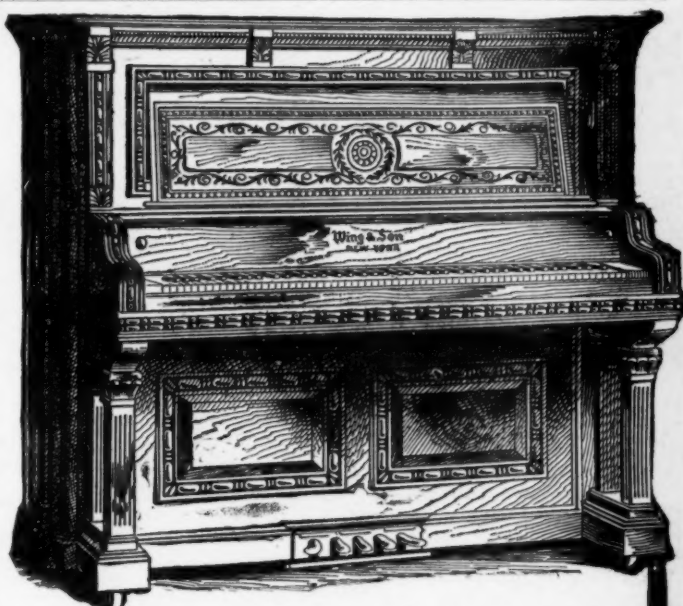
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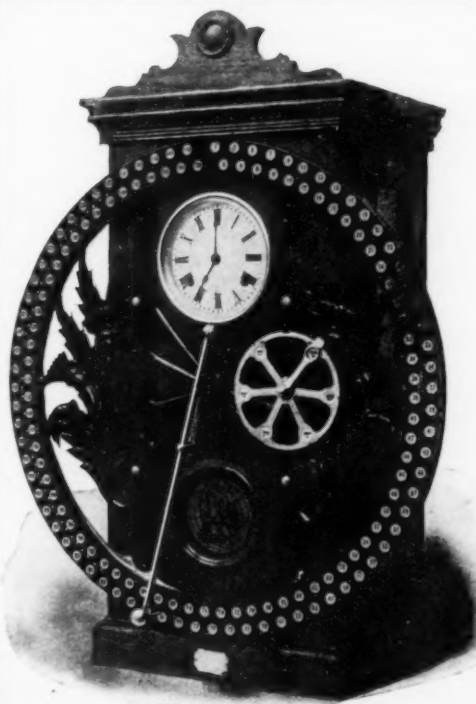
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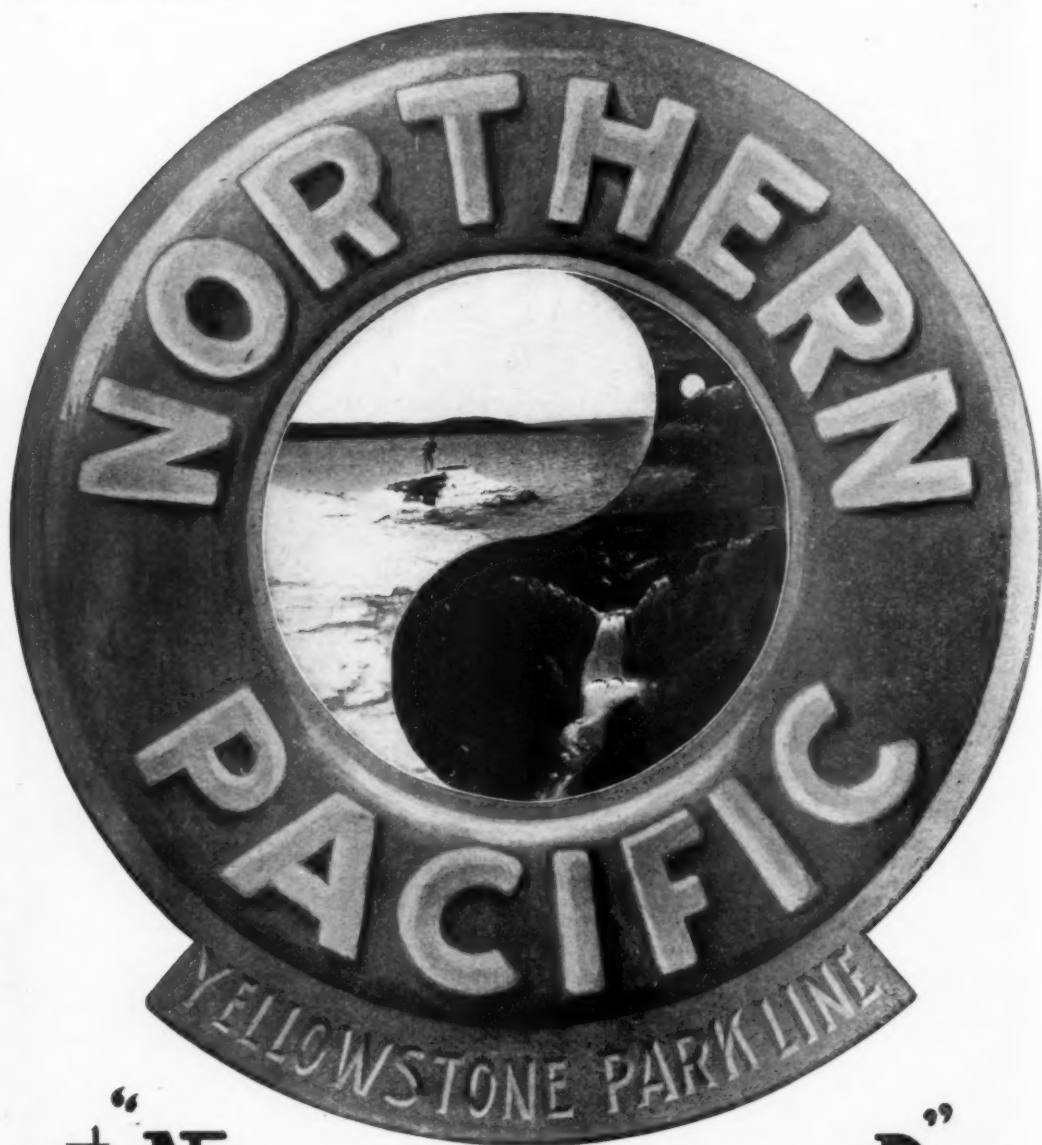
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